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ABSTRACTS

Changing Aspirations, Limited Attention, and War

By P. ANDERSON and T. J. McKEOWN

The authors present a theory of the general enabling conditions for war which predicts that war is possible, though not inevitable, when the conditions of the theory are satisfied. Whether a war will actually occur depends upon the idiosyncratic situational factors that are outside the scope of the theory. Three conditions make war possible: (1) Aspirations do not match achievements: governments only initiate wars when their achieved share of global capabilities differs from their aspired share of capabilities. (2) Salience: governments only initiate wars against other governments when there is a history of substantial interaction. (3) Power: governments never initiate wars against other governments that have a substantially greater military capacity. These conditions may be viewed as a series of three filters that identify pairs of countries between which war is possible. The theory predicts that wars will not occur in any dyad that does not pass through all the filters. In testing this theory for all nations between 1816 and 1980, the authors allowed for the fact that governments may preemptively initiate wars against other governments that meet these conditions.

Democracy from Above: The Political Origins of Military Dictatorship in Brazil

By Y. COHEN

The argument of this paper is that the emergence of military dictatorships, such as the Brazilian regime of 1964, is not caused by an economic crisis of dependent capitalist development. Rather, it results from a polarization and radicalization of the democratic regime by which it is preceded. Democracies handed down from above, like that in Brazil and other South American democracies, lend themselves to polarization and radicalization. They therefore favor the emergence of modern forms of autocracy.

The Party, the Military, and Decision Authority in the Soviet Union

By C. RICE

Soviet military decision making is characterized by a division of labor between the party, which issues broad policy guidance, and the professional military, which oversees the development of the armed forces based on that guidance. There is to date no civilian institution whose functions parallel those of the General Staff. The party is now, and has historically been, dependent on the professional military for the formation of options on strategy, organization, and force composition. The Soviets have never equated civilian control and authority with civilian management. Absolute party authority over defense policy has been maintained through control of personnel and resource allocation.

Declining Power and the Preventive Motivation for War

By J. S. LEVY

The preventive motivation for war arises from political leaders' perceptions that their states' military power and potential are declining relative to those of a rising adversary, and from their fear of the consequences of that decline. It is conceptualized as an intervening variable between changing power differentials and the outbreak of war, and is distinguished from preemption and other sources of better-now-than-later logic. The strength of the preventive motivation is hypothesized to be a function of a state's expectations regarding its rate of military decline, the margin of its inferiority in the future, the probability of a future war, and the probability of a victorious war now with acceptable costs. It is also affected by the risk orientation of decision makers; the influence of the military in the political process; and domestic political factors that undermine the political security of decision makers as well as the military power and potential of the state.

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The Steps to War:

TOWARD A SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION OF CORRELATES OF WAR FINDINGS

By J. A. VASQUEZ

Since its inception, the Correlates of War project has been in the forefront of the quantitative analysis of war. This review seeks to integrate some of the major findings of the project into an explanation that identifies the steps that regularly occur before war. The explanation must be seen as an artificial construct, based on inductive generalizations from existing evidence and clues, whose primary utility at this stage of inquiry is to see what patterns precede wars, what conditions are associated with peace, and what factors may be of causal significance. The findings and the explanation derived from them are relevant to assessing some common realist practices and policies of states such as alliance making, military build-ups, hard-line bargaining, balancing of power, peace-through-strength, and deterrence. It is argued that among equals, power-politics behavior does not avoid war, but leads political actors to take steps that bring them closer to war.

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Yair Evron

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CHANGING ASPIRATIONS, LIMITED ATTENTION, AND WAR

By PAUL A. ANDERSON and TIMOTHY J. McKEOWN*

Introduction

OUR objective is to contribute toward theoretical progress in understanding the outbreak of interstate war by achieving what Lakatos terms a "progressive problemshift."[1] In taking the theory of the outbreak of interstate war proposed by Bueno de Mesquita as a point of departure, we present an alternative theory that performs at least as well empirically and uses a more plausible theoretical structure.[2]

Bueno de Mesquita's theory accounts for decisions to initiate war using a rational choice, expected-utility framework. His theory starts with the presumption that decisions to initiate war are made by unitary, expected utility-maximizing actors who wage war against any target at any time when the expected utility of fighting is greater than the expected utility of not fighting. This basic core is fleshed out by auxiliary assumptions and operationalizations. The utility one nation has for another is based upon policy agreement as measured by similarity in alliance commitments. The probability that a nation will win a war against another nation is a function of the relative capabilities of the two nations and their respective allies, weighted by geographical distance. Within this theoretical structure Bueno de Mesquita embeds additional assumptions that deal with the potential contributions of third parties to conflicts, the risk proneness of the hypothetical decision maker, and the degree of structural uncertainty in the international system.

* This paper describes research supported by National Science Foundation Grant No. SES-8319532. Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, the Correlates of War Project, and the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research provided most of the data utilized in this research. We thank them for making the information available to us and absolve them of responsibility for whatever interpretations we have made of it. We also thank Alexander George, Joshua Goldstein, Robert Jervis, and Michael Loriaux for their helpful comments on various versions of this paper.

[1] Imre Lakatos, "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes," in Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, eds., *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 91-196.

[2] Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *The War Trap* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981). Bueno de Mesquita's theory has undergone two revisions since 1981: Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, "The War Trap Revisited: A Revised Expected Utility Model," *American Political Science Review* 79 (March 1985), 156-77, and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and David Lalman, "Reason and War," *American Political Science Review* 80 (December 1986), 1113-29. Because the original 1981 version has the broadest empirical test, we use it as our point of comparison.

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In support of his theory of interstate war as the product of expected utility-maximizing decision makers, Bueno de Mesquita offers contingency tables and measures of association which, on their face, show a very strong relationship between expected utility and decisions to initiate a war. Bueno de Mesquita asks us to judge his theory on the basis of empirical results and not on the basis of the truthfulness of his assumptions. On that basis there is, indeed, a prima facie case for acceptance.

Although theories cannot be rejected because their assumptions are unrealistic, they can be rejected in favor of others that explain the same empirical domain and use more realistic assumptions. Thus, we leave it to others to assess in detail the internal consistency and conceptual adequacy of Bueno de Mesquita's theory, and accept his implicit challenge to explain the empirical domain by using a more plausible theoretical structure.[3]

Our analysis departs from two central features of Bueno de Mesquita's theory. First, we omit his assumption that war decisions can be adequately explained as the product of unitary, expected utility-maximizing decision making. Expected-utility theories of the sort advanced by Bueno de Mesquita assume that goals are comprehensive and consistent, that search is exhaustive, and that attention to the environment is continuous. Many studies of the decision-making process in governments and other large organizations suggest, however, that goals are not comprehensive and are frequently inconsistent, that search is biased and incomplete, and that attention is sporadic.[4] Our second departure is a response to the disembodied nature of the decision to initiate a war in his theory. Operationalizations of utility, probability of winning, and uncertainty are the only components of his argument that connect Bueno de Mesquita's theory to the phenomenon of war. Although operationalizations are no less theoretical than are the equations used to express the basic relationships in the model, Bueno de Mesquita chooses to stress the expected-utility framework used in the equations as his key theoretical contribution. Expected-utility theory, however, is little more than a plastic shell, capable

[3] Steven J. Majeski and David J. Sylvan, "Simple Choices and Complex Calculations: A Critique of the War Trap," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 28 (June 1984), 316-40; Zeev Maoz, "The Expected Utility of International Conflict: Some Theoretical Problems and Empirical Surprises in 'The War Trap,'" mimeo (Pittsburgh: Carnegie-Mellon University, 1982); R. Harrison Wagner, "War and Expected-Utility Theory," *World Politics* 36 (April 1984), 407-23.

[4] Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971); Paul A. Anderson, "Decision Making by Objection and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 28 (June 1983), 201-22; Richard Cyert and James G. March, *A Behavioral Theory of the Firm* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963); James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, *Ambiguity and Choice in Organizations* (Bergen, Norway: Universitetsforlaget, 1976); Herbert A. Simon, *Administrative Behavior*, 3rd ed. (New York: Free Press, 1976).

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of modeling almost any human choice by virtue of its extreme flexibility. Our preference is for a theory that is grounded in a central feature of international politics—the competitive national accumulation of capabilities—and is consistent with what we know about governmental decision making as an organizational process.

Theory Development

Our approach to a theory of interstate war has four central characteristics. First, our theory is decision-oriented. Wars are assumed to occur, not because governments are compelled by circumstances or efficient causes, but because the leaders of a government choose to initiate them. Second, we attempt to identify only necessary conditions, and not necessary and sufficient conditions. Although a theory of necessary conditions is weaker than one that posits both necessary and sufficient conditions, we are persuaded that the former theory will be more productive: following Bueno de Mesquita,[5] it seems quite likely that there is no universal sufficient condition for the outbreak of war; any empirically adequate sufficient condition undoubtedly will be a string of particular circumstances. Third, our theory does not assume that war decisions are the product of expected-utility calculations. Instead, we assume that the decisions are the product of a boundedly rational process characterized by aspiration levels, limited and problem-motivated search, a failure to make tradeoffs, and a reliance on rules of thumb. Fourth, our approach is to see interstate war as growing out of the routine, day-to-day interactions of nations: without such prior interactions, war is unlikely.

The causes of war have long been separated into underlying and immediate causes; underlying causes are the fundamental sources of conflict and tension between states, and immediate causes are the stimuli for a particular conflict.[6] Our theory also separates the causes of war into two classes: universal necessary conditions, which we attempt to describe, and situation-specific factors, which lead to war when the enabling conditions are present. The situation-specific factors fall outside the domain of our theory.

The theory embodies a simple perspective on international politics:

Nations interact with each other. These interactions, which include diplomacy, international trade and commerce, and unofficial nongovernmental exchanges, provide the opportunity for misunderstandings and conflicts between

[5] Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 2, 1981), 5.

[6] Richard Ned Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981).

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governments. By themselves, these conflicts are a routine part of international interaction and are of no particular significance. Under appropriate circumstances, however, they can serve as a casus belli.

From this perspective, what needs to be explained is *not* the existence of conflicts between states. Disagreements of various sorts are always present in the international system. The central analytic problem is to determine the conditions under which disagreements will lead to war.

We start with an assumption central to behavioral theories of organizational and governmental decision making: organizational attention is a scarce resource.[7] Organizations do not continuously scan their environment searching for opportunities, but attend to the environment in an episodic, fragmented manner. The first problem, therefore, is to understand the conditions under which governmental attention will be directed to the external environment in ways likely to result in inter-state conflict.

The available empirical evidence suggests that governments are boundedly rational decision-making systems. Their goal-seeking behavior can better be described by a "satisficing" or adaptive-expectations model than by an expected-utility one. When aspirations match actual or expected achievements, their behavior is qualitatively different than when they do not match. In particular, their attention to the external environment (in this case, potential adversaries in war) is not constant and unflagging; rather, it is stimulated by disparities between aspirations and performance. We maintain that governments will attend to the external environment, and provide a necessary condition of war, when there is a disparity between national aspirations and national achievements. Such an argument is similar to Organski and Kugler's power transition model, and is also similar in spirit to the argument of status-inconsistency models.[8] Lenin's contention that the "law of uneven development" accounts for inter-imperialist wars can also be subsumed under our more general argument.[9] Further parallels to our approach can be found in economists' treatments of adaptive rationality, the mathematical learning theory, and the "J-curve" theory of domestic political violence.[10]

[7] Allison (fn. 4); Cyert and March (fn. 4); James G. March and Herbert A. Simon, *Organizations* (New York: Wiley, 1958).

[8] A.F.K. Organski and Jacek Kugler, *The War Ledger* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

[9] V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1969).

[10] Richard H. Day and Theodore Groves, eds., *Adaptive Economic Models* (New York: Academic Press, 1975); James C. Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," *American Sociological Review* 27 (February 1962), 5-19; William K. Estes, "Individual Behavior in Uncertain Situations: An Interpretation in Terms of Statistical Association Theory," in Robert M. Thrall, Clyde H. Coombs, and Robert L. Davis, eds., *Decision Processes* (New York: Wiley, 1954), 127-38.

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Once governmental attention has been focused on the external environment, the second problem is to determine where it will be directed. If our theory posited comprehensive rational decision-making processes, this step would be trivial. We would simply assume, as does Bueno de Mesquita, that each government considers every other government as a possible target. But, consistent with our initial assumption of bounded rationality, we propose that governmental attention is focused by prior interaction: *casus belli* do not exist for governments that have not had prior substantial interaction.

The final consideration, once attention is focused externally on salient actors, is whether governmental leaders will choose to invoke an available *casus belli*. Following our bounded-rationality approach, we assume that governments do not perform complex calculations of the expected utility of various courses of action, but rather assess alternatives by applying relatively simple rules of thumb and by avoiding explicit comparison of trade-offs. Their understanding of the world is simple-minded compared to comprehensive rationalistic representations of the process, and "problems" or threats are identified with their most obvious and immediate manifestations. Governments are capable of strategic calculations, but only relatively simple ones, and they assess their chances of winning wars in a relatively crude fashion.

For a war to occur between two nations, this conception implies the following necessary conditions:

1. At least one of the nations is experiencing a disparity between achievements and aspirations.
2. There is a history of previous interaction that leads this nation to focus attention on the other as a possible target for military action.
3. Rule-of-thumb calculations convince at least one set of leaders that going to war has a reasonable chance of producing an acceptable outcome.

These propositions are the core of our theory. They can be viewed as a series of three filters or as a set of imbedded conditions that identify pairs of countries between which war is possible. The theory predicts that wars will not occur in any dyad that does not pass through all the filters. The task, of course, is to specify the procedures for determining whether the three conditions are satisfied.

Modeling Preemption

The possibility of strategic interaction between states implies that a state that is not itself disposed to attack may observe another's preparations for war and conclude that a preemptive attack is the least unpleasant option.

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There are essentially three approaches to the problems raised by preemption. One approach is simply to ignore it, on the assumption that it occurs so seldom as to be empirically insignificant. Another is to attempt to state a separate theory of preemption by positing some explicit process whereby a preemptive attack is triggered. A third approach, which is the one adopted here, is to make pairs of governments rather than single governments the domain of the theory, thereby folding preemption into it. This modification presents three possible types of pairs: neither nation is a potential initiator; one is a potential initiator while the other is not; or both are potential initiators. We assume that preemption will occur if our theory predicts that the preempting nation is a candidate for attack. For pairs that contain no potential initiator, no war is expected. War (and hence, the possibility of preemption) can occur only in the remaining two cases. In the second case, the nation that is not classed as a potential initiator may launch a preemptive attack. In the third case, either nation may preempt. We can compare empirical results that treat preemption in this fashion with those obtained by deliberately ignoring the possibility of preemption in order to gain an idea of the historical significance of the phenomenon.

The theoretical structure we have described stands in sharp contrast to the basic assumptions of Bueno de Mesquita's expected-utility theory. Although both view the outbreak of inter-state war from a broadly rationalistic decision-making perspective, our theory emphasizes the divergence between aspirations and achievements as a fundamental factor, in contrast to Bueno de Mesquita's static cross-sectional view of national utilities. Our theory assumes that governmental attention toward the international environment is sporadic and focused, in contrast to the continuous and comprehensive scanning in the expected-utility theory. Finally, cross-sectional comparisons of relative capability play a role in our formulation only after the activation and attention conditions have been satisfied.

Research Design

Rather than treat decision making as a process modeled by a single global calculation of expected utilities, our model embodies a common behavioral perspective that conceives of decision making as a three-step process involving activation, attention, and choice. We model each step in the process separately, evaluating it in terms of the gross error rate and the "prediction logic" approach outlined below. Finally, we also evaluate the cumulative performance of the assembled stages.

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Evaluating Models of Necessary Conditions

Our research effort is intended to identify a set of necessary conditions for the onset of war. This objective has some important consequences for evaluating the empirical adequacy of the result. Even though they do not count as prediction failures, we cannot be indifferent to the number of cases where the theory predicts war is possible and no war occurs. A high proportion of cases of this type would imply that the theory, though making few wrong predictions, is quite weak: situational factors not captured by the theory would be more important than the general factors within the theory. One could achieve high prediction accuracy for this type of model simply by postulating weak necessary conditions: if the theory classed every case as meeting the necessary conditions, then it would yield no incorrect predictions. The result, however, would be a vacuous theory. In order to evaluate the extent to which our theory is making vacuous predictions, we must examine all nations for all years for the period under study rather than focus exclusively on the instances of war.[11]

We use the prediction analysis approach of Hildebrand, Laing, and Rosenthal to evaluate our models of necessary conditions.[12] We use their ∇, a proportional reduction in error measure, to evaluate the accuracy of the prediction, and their "scope" to measure the vacuousness of the prediction.[13]

∇ is defined as follows:

$$\nabla = 1 - \frac{\text{probability of making an error predicting wars, given the condition}}{\text{probability of making an error predicting wars, without the condition}}$$

[11] Benjamin A. Most and Harvey Starr, "Case Selection, Conceptualizations and Basic Logic in the Study of War," *American Journal of Political Science* 26 (November 1982), 834-56.

[12] David K. Hildebrand, James D. Laing, and Howard Rosenthal, "Prediction Analysis in Political Research," *American Political Science Review* 60 (June 1976), 509-35.

[13] Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 2, 1981) uses Yule's Q. We believe that this is not a particularly helpful statistic for our purposes because, unlike Bueno de Mesquita, we examine all nation-years for the period. Although it is certainly true that $Q = 1.0$ when only one of the off-diagonal cells equals 0, this is not by itself a sufficiently attractive property to overcome what we view as its most important weakness. Q is maximized by minimizing the product of the off-diagonal elements, bc. But a crucial question in a model of necessary conditions is how each of the variables b and c contributes to that minimization. If b represents cases where war has occurred when it was predicted not to, then those cases are clear prediction failures, as we have noted above. However, c must then represent cases where war was predicted but none has occurred. A low value for c means that the model is rather stringent in its conditions; in fact, a value of 0 for c would suggest that one has an excellent model of *sufficient* conditions. But if one is serious about claiming to have a model of necessary conditions, minimizing the value of b must take precedence over minimizing c. We contend that, since stringency is logically independent of prediction accuracy, two measures of performance are really needed.

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The probability of making a prediction error with knowledge of the condition is equal to the proportion of cases where war occurred when the condition was not satisfied. The probability of making an error without knowledge of the condition is defined as the product of the proportion of all cases not meeting the condition and the proportion of all cases resulting in wars, or the marginal probability of making an error.

∇ thus is a measure of the extent to which knowing whether the necessary condition is satisfied improves the ability to predict whether a war will occur over chance. ∇ varies between 1.0 and minus infinity. When ∇ is positive, it has a straightforward proportional reduction in error interpretation. When ∇ is negative, it reflects the proportionate *increase* in prediction errors resulting from using the condition to predict wars. For example, a ∇ of 0.5 indicates that knowledge of the condition results in a 50 percent improvement in predicting the outbreak of war.

Because the accuracy of predictions based on necessary conditions can be trivially inflated by making the necessary conditions weak, we also want to measure the extent to which our conditions are at risk of making a prediction error. Hildebrand and his associates define the precision of a proposition as the denominator of the ∇ statistic. Because we are dealing with predictions of rare events (there were only 77 wars in over 200,000 nation-years), the skewed nature of this distribution makes their measure of precision problematic. We use a component of their precision measure—the proportion of all cases not meeting the condition—to evaluate the degree to which our condition is at risk of making an error. Hildebrand et al. define this as the "scope" of a proposition. Errors can only be produced by instances that fail to meet the condition—that is, it is not met, but war occurs anyhow. Thus, the proportion of all cases failing to meet the condition is a simple measure of the extent to which a proposition is at risk of making an error. When the scope is low, the condition is satisfied in most instances, and the risk of error is low.

Because ∇ and scope are independent, we must use both criteria in evaluating our filters. An ideal filter would have a high scope (meaning that the filter had a high risk of making an error) and a high ∇ (meaning that knowledge of the filter condition substantially reduced the probability of making an error). To determine the best-fitting model, we computed both ∇ and scope, plotted the distribution of points, and selected a point on the frontier of the distribution. While most of the parameter settings were dominated, a handful of undominated points remained and we were faced with making a tradeoff between scope and ∇. In selecting from among the undominated points, we gave more emphasis to ∇ than to scope.

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The Activation Filter (Filter 1)

Our theory views war as the product of a process involving activation, attention, and choice. The activation filter is designed to identify those governments that will be activated to attend to the external environment.

In our model, nations are postulated to aspire to achieving a certain *relative* share of world capabilities. When aspirations diverge from actual or expected achievements, nations are said to be activated. This treatment of goal seeking differs from standard expected utility formulations in that degrees of goal attainment are not measured; instead, the theory simply partitions outcomes into those that match aspirations and those that do not. In general, we expect behavior in the former situations to be qualitatively different from behavior in the latter ones. In particular, we argue that, when expectations and aspirations do not match, attention will be directed toward the external environment.

There are two reasons for adopting this particular treatment of goal seeking. First, the assumptions required to justify an aspiration-level model seem far less heroic than the sorts of assumptions required to make the expected-utility model plausible. Bueno de Mesquita, for example, assumes that war decisions are made by an expected utility-maximizing strongman who makes all war and peace decisions as a dictator.[14] Such assumptions are unnecessary because aspiration-level formulations do not require a single consistent utility function. Second, the aspiration formulation in conjunction with a satisficing search rule (stop searching when what has been found is "good enough") makes plausible assumptions about the information-processing and decision-making capacity of governments. There is considerable empirical evidence from studies of business and governments that activity is stimulated by failures to meet aspired levels of performance.[15]

We use relative capabilities as the criterion of performance for two reasons. The first is strategic. Because we are interested in developing an alternative to Bueno de Mesquita's theory, we need a measure of performance that spans the time frame against which his theory has been tested. The Correlates of War project's measurement of national capabilities is the best comprehensive source of such data. The second reason is substantive. Advantages in national capabilities (which include military, economic, industrial, and demographic factors) provide a basis for power and influence in the international system.[16] Even if power is highly situ-

[14] Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 2, 1981), 27-28.

[15] Cyert and March (fn. 4); Morton H. Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1974); Simon (fn. 4).

[16] Stuart A. Bremer, "National Capabilities and War Proneness," in J. David Singer, ed.,

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ation-specific, however, it seems likely that national leaders will monitor performance on only a few, highly general capability indicators rather than attempt the much more complicated task of assessing their capacities on a case-by-case basis.[17]

We examine three variants of the basic aspiration model in constructing this first filter. They all have the common property that aspirations are influenced by experience: if the relative share of capabilities is increasing, the aspired level of performance rises; if the relative share is decreasing, the aspired level of performance falls. Each variant, however, adopts a slightly different method for incorporating experience into aspirations.

The first model is the simplest. It shows current aspirations as a function of previous aspirations and previous performance. A government is activated when

$$\text{SHARE}_t < \text{ASPIRED}_t$$
$$\text{ASPIRED}_t = \alpha(\text{SHARE}_{t-1} - \text{ASPIRED}_{t-1}) + \text{ASPIRED}_{t-1}$$
$$0.0 < \alpha \leq 1.0.$$

Note that if $\alpha = 1.0$, the model reduces to

$$\text{SHARE}_t < \text{SHARE}_{t-1}$$

This version assumes that the aspired share is whatever was achieved during the previous period.

The second variant posits that a projected capability share is used instead of the actual share in judging satisfaction; a government is activated when

$$\text{PROJECTED}_t < \text{ASPIRED}_t$$
$$\text{ASPIRED}_t = \alpha(\text{SHARE}_{t-1} - \text{ASPIRED}_{t-1}) + \text{ASPIRED}_{t-1}$$
$$\text{PROJECTED}_t = \beta(\text{SHARE}_{t-1} - \text{SHARE}_{t-2}) + \text{SHARE}_{t-1}$$
$$0.0 < \alpha < \beta \leq 1.0$$

A third version of the aspiration model builds on an argument by James March that the relationship between achievement of aspirations and the triggering of search behavior is more complicated than the simple step-function relationship depicted in the first two models.[18] March sug-

The Correlates of War II: Testing some Realpolitik Models (New York: Free Press, 1980), 59-61; Organski and Kugler (fn. 8); J. David Singer, Stuart A. Bremer, and John Stuckey, "Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War, 1816-1965," in Bruce M. Russett, ed., *Peace, War, and Numbers* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1972), 19-48.

[17] David A. Baldwin, "Power Analysis and World Politics: New Trends versus Old Tendencies," *World Politics* 31 (January 1979), 161-94.

[18] James G. March, "Decision Making Perspective: Decisions in Organizations and Theories of Choice," in Andrew H. Van de Ven and William F. Joyce, eds., *Perspectives on Organizational Design and Behavior* (New York: Wiley, 1981), 214-15.

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gests that, when achievements consistently exceed aspirations, the presence of high levels of organizational slack can also stimulate search even though firms are meeting their goals.

Search under these circumstances is just another use for slack resources. When slack resources are abundant, search can be triggered when

$$\text{ASPIRED}_t > \text{PROJECTED}_t \text{ OR PROJECTED}_t > \delta\text{ASPIRED}_t$$
$$\text{ASPIRED}_t = \alpha(\text{SHARE}_{t-1} - \text{ASPIRED}_{t-1}) + \text{ASPIRED}_{t-1}$$
$$\text{PROJECTED}_t = \beta(\text{SHARE}_{t-1} - \text{SHARE}_{t-2}) + \text{SHARE}_{t-1}$$
$$0.0 < \alpha < \beta \leq 1.0 < \delta$$

That is, when projections exceed aspirations by δ, governments may be "supersatisfied," and be stimulated to attend to the external environment.

All three versions of the aspiration model contain parameters that must be estimated from the data. We estimate these parameters through an iterative search, with the goal of minimizing the number of prediction errors. This amounts to minimizing the number of nonactivated nations (i.e., nations not passing the filter) that are engaged in war, provided the resulting model has a positive ∇ statistic. For any given set of parameter values and the historical capability data, one can generate a list of activated governments for any given year. Once governments are classed as activated or nonactivated, then one simply notes whether the observed war-fighting states are distributed among the activated and nonactivated nations in the manner predicted by the theory.

It is, of course, necessary to search through a variety of parameter values to ensure that one has identified the value that yields the strongest model. We place bounds on the range of these parameters. With respect to the parameter α, we have restricted the values to (0, 1] because it seems unlikely that aspirations will increase more quickly than actual gains. We then examine all values of α within the interval (0.0, 1.0] using an increment of .02; i.e., {.02, .04, .06, . . . , .96, .98, 1.00}.[19] The number of nations that do not pass the filter (are not activated) but that are involved in interstate wars is computed for each value of α. For the second model with its two parameters α and β, the search for values of α and β will be constrained by the assumption that $\alpha < \beta$. (The initial increment for β is set at .05.) This constraint follows from the assumption that the projected share is more likely to be sensitive to actual experience than the aspired share; on this view, desires change more slowly than perceptions. This is not to argue that perceptions are always accurate, or even mostly accurate.

[19] In early runs we also tried using a finer increment—.005—at times. This resulted in only modest improvements in number of cases filtered out, and generally no improvement in the error count.

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It is simply a claim based on the observation that demands for economic growth or for governmental programs such as military spending tend to acquire entrenched organized constituencies, and that this factor imparts a substantial degree of inertia to the demands made on governments. The third model, with the parameter 1, is handled in a similar fashion, with the addition of a search for 1 within the range of [1.1, 1.5], with an increment of .1.

Both preemptive and non-preemptive assumptions are tested. The variant of the basic model that recognizes preemption uses pairs of nations (dyads) as the basic unit of analysis; it counts an occurrence of war within the dyad as a prediction success without inquiring into the precise circumstances of initiation. The version that ignores the possibility of preemption counts as a prediction success only those instances where the activated nations are the initiators.

The database for determining activation is the annual national capability data collected by the Correlates of War (COW) project.[20] This database currently contains annual data on military expenditures, military personnel, iron and steel production, energy consumption, total population, and size of urban population for all members of the international system for each year from 1816 to 1980.[21] We have revised some values in the COW capability dataset where alternative estimates seemed to be well documented.[22] We follow the Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey procedure of constructing an index of relative shares for each nation for each year. The annual data are converted to a proportion of the total for the entire international system for that category. We did this in three ways:

1. Following Singer, Bremer and Stuckey as well as Bueno de Mesquita, we took the arithmetic mean of capability shares across all six capability measures.[23]
2. We analyzed just the two military capability measures alone, taking their arithmetic mean shares for each nation for each year.
3. We analyzed the four non-military measures alone, taking their arithmetic mean shares for each nation for each year.

The various ways of computing capability shares allow us to examine whether narrowly military factors are dominant in governments' assessments of relative position, or whether a broader notion of capability seems to capture competitive dynamics more faithfully.

Finally, we tested an alternative to the simple annual updating of the

[20] Singer et al. (fn. 16).

[21] The war years 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 were largely devoid of data in the original dataset. We have remedied this to a small extent.

[22] Details on dataset revisions are available from the authors.

[23] Singer et al. (fn. 16); Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 2, 1981), 103.

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previous year's aspirations by the previous year's performance. This alternative consisted of measuring performance in terms of a five-year weighted moving average rather than only in terms of the previous year.[24] We decided to examine this partly because we uncovered enough omissions and suspected or confirmed errors in the data to look for some sort of smoothing procedure.

The Attention Filter (Filter 2)

Once we have established that governments are activated by a gap between expectations and aspirations, our next task is to determine where attention will be focused. In the absence of other information, any nation in the international system is a possible target, but not all nations are equally likely targets. Our theory is based on the presumption that attention is a scarce resource, and that governments allocate attention primarily to nations with which they have had substantial amounts of previous interaction. The second filter is thus designed to exclude those dyads within which there is little previous interaction (such as, for instance, Fiji and Albania).

This approach to identifying the available targets is consistent with three different perspectives on the national decision-making process. First, it is consistent with arguments concerning both the cognitive and affective component of human decision making. Searching for a target among those nations with which the government is familiar is consistent with arguments about the importance of an "availability heuristic" in decision making under uncertainty.[25] Considering as possible targets those nations that are currently the source of conflict and friction is also consistent with an argument that frictional conflict has vividness effects; negative affect among decision makers can readily be focused on the "source" of the friction.[26]

Second, our postulated search process is consistent with studies of organizational decision making in firms and governments.[27] The organizational search process operates with a simple-minded view of causal-

[24] The weights decline in linear fashion. We also developed a method for handling missing data within the five-year period by using only those data that were present, and automatically making the appropriate adjustment in weights to reflect the missing year.

[25] Richard E. Nisbett and Lee Ross, *Human Inference: Strategies and Shortcomings in Social Judgment* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980), 18-23.

[26] *Ibid.*, 51-52; Dina A. Zinnes, "The Expression and Perception of Hostility in Prewar Crisis: 1914," in J. David Singer, ed., *Quantitative International Politics: Insights and Evidence* (New York: Free Press, 1968), 85-122.

[27] Cyert and March (fn. 4); Paul A. Anderson, "Justifications and Precedents as Constraints in Foreign Policy Decision Making," *American Journal of Political Science* 25 (November 1981), 738-61.

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ity—with which one would be inclined to see attack on the immediate sources of friction as a solution to the "problem" of lagging capabilities. Moreover, the existence of frictions creates a legitimate organizational pretext for the discussion and justification of overt military action.[28]

Third, the postulated process is consistent with a traditional balance-of-power or microeconomic view of interstate disputes as being driven by conflicts of interest.[29] In this perspective, local frictions are no longer merely attention-getters, pretexts, or triggering events—they are manifestations of the underlying conflicts.

There are several ways in which the salience of one nation for another can be measured; most of them have received some attention in the theoretical literature on interstate conflict. Measures of salience can be divided into two groups: conflict-based measures and interaction-based measures. Conflict-based measures assume that governmental attention is focused on past or existing conflicts of interest. Interaction-based measures assume that attention is conditioned on interaction regardless of any conflicts of interest. We examine both types.

Since the publication of Richardson's work, students of international politics have been systematically studying the effect of geography on the outbreak of war.[30] Because geography has a strong influence on interaction, geographical propinquity measured by physical distance can be used to identify those dyads that engage in frequent exchanges.[31] Similarly, data on diplomatic exchanges[32] or joint membership in intergovernmental organizations[33] can indicate interaction and hence the possibility for conflict. The three measures are all alike in that they treat interaction as a necessary condition for the appearance of conflict, thus suggesting that an absence of interaction implies that there are no possibilities for conflict. These approaches are consistent with an image of international politics in which states are quasi-rationalistic, only imperfectly in control of their own actions (let alone the actions of others), and not necessarily capable of distinguishing fundamental conflicts from frictional ones.

A fourth indicator of attention is grounded in a Realist approach; conflict is presumed to emerge from a structure of alliances. This approach stands in sharp contrast to the interaction-based approaches because it

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 2, 1981); Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 5th ed. (New York: Knopf, 1978).

[30] Lewis F. Richardson, *Statistics of Deadly Quarrels* (Pittsburgh: Boxwood Press, 1960).

[31] Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 2, 1981).

[32] Melvin Small and J. David Singer, "The Diplomatic Importance of States, 1816-1970: An Extension and Refinement of the Indicator," *World Politics* 25 (July 1973), 577-99.

[33] Michael Wallace and J. David Singer, "Intergovernmental Organization in the Global System, 1815-1964: A Quantitative Description," *International Organization* 24 (No. 2, 1970), 239-87.

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presupposes a single source of conflict (the international alliance structure) and is generally consistent with an image of international politics that treats states as capable of making finer distinctions between intense and less intense conflicts of interest and as having more control over their own behavior. For this indicator, we use Bueno de Mesquita's ingenious measure of conflict of interest derived from data on international alliances.[34]

(A fifth measure of salience, akin to the interaction-based ones noted above, can be defined using Bueno de Mesquita's measures of divergence and similarity in alliance patterns.[35] By taking the absolute values of Bueno de Mesquita's conflict-of-interest measures, the latter can be transformed into measures of simple salience. Under this procedure, nations having strongly similar or dissimilar alliance commitments will be more salient than those having statistically independent alliance commitments.)

A sixth possibility is theoretically intermediate between the Realist and interaction-based approaches. Previous incidents and disputes as measured by the Correlates of War project may provide a good indicator of attention.[36] Unlike the Realist approach, the focus on incidents and disputes presupposes that not all of the important conflicts in the international system are internalized through a set of alliances; unlike the interaction-based approaches, this focus presupposes that prior violent or near-violent behavior has a special significance. Like the information on alliances, the information on incidents and disputes can be used to develop a pure interaction filter in which joint participation in a dispute—even as allies—provides a subsequent focus for attention.

In the version of the theory that ignores the possibility of preemption, the second filter will produce a list of potential targets for each activated government, representing those nations against which war is possible. In the dyadic version of the theory that allows for preemption, it will produce the set of dyads for which at least one member is activated. The dyads that pass through the filter will be those in which at least one member is activated and which engage in routine day-to-day interactions.

The Choice Filter (Filter 3)

The third filter reflects the proposition that governments generally do not initiate wars with the intention of losing. Underlying this filter are three questions that every potential aggressor must answer: (1) Against

[34] Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 2, 1981), 115-18.

[35] For work on another part of the model we updated the alliance dataset to reflect alliances formed up to 1980, but ran this part of the model using data supplied by Bueno de Mesquita on Europe and the Middle East only.

[36] Charles S. Gochman and Zeev Maoz, "Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816-1976: Procedures, Patterns, and Insights," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 28 (December 1984), 585-616.

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whom will I be fighting? (2) Who will be fighting on my side? (3) Do I have an acceptable chance of winning? If all wars were between two states only, the first two questions would never arise (except in a trivial way); alliances, then, represent complications that the theory must address.

Our approach to modeling the actual decision to initiate a war is to begin with the simplest, most general theoretical structure that offers some hope of producing meaningful results. We argue that the decision to initiate war is a product of the application of a simple rule of thumb rather than a complex calculation of expected utility. The basic version of this filter is that activated nations compare the capabilities of their side to those of the other side, and attack when the capability ratio is sufficiently in their favor. The filter thus is an exercise in glorified "bean counting," in which decision makers compare two stocks of capabilities. In this way, it is broadly similar to a wide variety of Realist approaches. It is not, however, an expected-utility model because it makes no use of a probability term, and it posits a single threshold capability ratio that is "good enough" for going to war—thus creating a step-function relationship (rather than a continuous function) between the capability ratio and war initiation.

In preemption versions of this filter, we postulate that the target of the activated state "knows" that the capability ratios are such as to make an attack by the other state a real possibility; under those circumstances, preemption also becomes a real possibility. As before, the performance of this version of the filter is assessed by analyzing dyads rather than individual nations. The war-prediction logic distinguishes between two types of dyads: those in which both members meet the activation and attention conditions, and those in which only one member meets the activation condition. When both members of the dyad meet the prior conditions, either is a candidate for preemption. When aspirations and performance diverge for only one member of the dyad, however, the other is a candidate for preemption only if the diverging nation meets the conditions of Filter 3. Thus, a nonactivated government initiating a war against a weaker activated target is considered an error in prediction, but a nonactivated government initiating a war against a stronger activated target is classified as a preemptive attack.

If the threshold were set at 0.5 or lower, every dyad passing the attention filter and containing two activated states would be a potential candidate for war. When both nations are activated, a postulated capability threshold that is significantly greater than 0.5 is required before many such dyads will be classed as "war not possible."

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Alliances—particularly when the allies are strong and the primary belligerents are weak—can alter the balance of capabilities considerably. One could, if one wished, simply ignore alliances and model initiation as if they did not matter. Alternately, one could develop simple procedures for including the capabilities of allies in the capability calculations of the respective parties. Our procedure for including allies is straightforward. We presume that only nations which have defense pacts or ententes with a given nation can be counted as allies. (If a nation is allied with both sides, it is postulated to remain neutral.) This way of conceiving of formal alliances deliberately ignores the legal properties of the alliance in assuming that ostensibly defensive alliances are likely to come into play in offensive situations as well. We have not yet tested an alternative assumption.

We postulate that, among the nations that meet these requirements, the largest allies will be most likely to intervene, while the smallest will be least likely. We justify this by means of Siverson and King's empirical results on alliance members' actual compliance with the terms of alliance treaties;[37] we can also justify it theoretically by arguing that the smallest nations will have the least effect on the outcome, and that they can wait to join the conflict until they can be reasonably certain that they will end up on the winning side—thus taking a free ride.

The choice (or relative capability) filter is run with a varying threshold for the number of allies postulated to join in the conflict, ranked in order of capability weight. We use different capability measures: "military only" and "combined." As in the Activation Filter, our "military only" index relies solely on number of people under arms; at this point, we lack confidence in the accuracy of the military budget figures, but have not had time to revise them. For all versions of the filter, gross capability weights are adjusted for the distance between the contending parties, following the procedure outlined in Bueno de Mesquita.[38]

Results

The Activation Filter (Filter 1)

The results from the activation filter are encouraging. The best performer, which generates only 5 errors in a total of 77 wars, is a variant of the "supersatisfied" model which allows for preemption, considers only

[37] Randolph M. Siverson and Joel King, "Attributes of National Alliance Membership and War Participation, 1815-1965," *American Journal of Political Science* 24 (February 1980), 1-15.
[38] Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 2, 1981), 105-8.

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military capabilities, and smooths capabilities over five years. At the parameter settings where this error rate is obtained, about 44 percent of the nations are classed as "satisfied," and 20 percent of the cases are classed as "no war predicted." Since 80 percent of the cases are thus candidates for war, the scope is modest, but only 6.5 percent of the historically observed wars were incorrectly classed as "no war predicted"; so there is a substantial gain over the background error rate. This is accomplished with an absolute number of errors that is reasonably small.

In general, the preemption variation of a model outperformed the no-preemption variation of the same model. The use of five-year smoothing generally produced little or no gain in predictive accuracy or scope over the equivalent model based just on the previous year's performance. Controlling for the use of preemption, the method of measuring capabilities, and the use of a five-year moving average, a supersatisfaction specification generally was more accurate than its competitors.

TABLE 1
PERFORMANCE OF THE ACTIVATION FILTER

PARAMETER VALUES	WW	$W\overline{W}$	$\overline{W}W$	$\overline{W}\overline{W}$	ERR	∇	SCOPE
$\alpha = .1$ $\beta = .2$ $\delta = 1.5$	72	169,237	5	42,549	.065	.677	.20

WW: Classed as "war possible," and war occurs.
$W\overline{W}$: Classed as "war possible," but no war occurs.
$\overline{W}W$: Classed as "war not possible," but war occurs.
$\overline{W}\overline{W}$: Classed as "war not possible," and no war occurs.
ERR: Model error rate—$\overline{W}W/(\overline{W}W + WW)$
∇: *Proportional reduction in prediction error*
SCOPE: Proportion of cases classified as "war not possible"

For the modeling of Filter 1 as a whole, those versions that assessed relative capabilities in purely military terms generally performed better than those that assessed relative capabilities more broadly. This suggests that, that least in one sense, a Realist perspective on war is justified: changes in the military balance among states seem more closely related to war initiation than changes in broader performance categories. Moreover, states that accumulate narrowly *economic* capabilities more slowly than they aspire were found to become involved in war less often than one would predict on the basis of a random draw. Such a finding is consistent with an argument advanced by Eckert Kehr in the 1920s to the

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effect that poor business conditions have an inhibiting effect on war-fighting by eliminating any slack in government budgets that might otherwise have been used to finance a war.[39] The fact that the supersatisfied model performed better than the others suggests that there is some empirical support for Lebow's contention that perceptions of "falling behind" and of possessing large advantages can *both* lead to aggression.[40] It is important to note, however, that the less complicated projection model performed only slightly less well than the supersatisfied model, suggesting that the more prevalent dynamic is that of aggression being triggered by perceptions of falling behind. A similar finding at the individual level was reported by Grofman and Muller in their test of Davies's J-curve hypothesis.[41]

The Attention Filter (Filter 2)

The second filter is intended to depict the process whereby activated states focus attention on possible targets for aggressive actions or demands. The various possible models are summarized in Table 2; results are presented in Table 3.

The purely interaction-based incidents-and-disputes model generates fewer errors than does the conflict-based model, but its scope is slightly less than that of the conflict-based one. The performance of the interaction-based incidents-and-disputes model is clearly superior to the other interaction-based models in both prediction accuracy and scope. Both the interaction-based and the conflict-based incidents-and-disputes models outperform the model based on conflict of interest calculated from alliance memberships; they are also superior to the other interaction-based models. The negative scores for ∇ for the intergovernmental-organizations models and the conflict-of-interest models suggest that when these are used as predictors, more errors in prediction result than there would be in simple random guessing.

The performance of the incidents-and-disputes model is striking, not only because of the overall results, but also because of the fact that the interaction history of the previous 50 years is so potent a predictor. The result can be interpreted as an indication of the length of institutional memory; of the slowness with which disputes are resolved; or of the per-

[39] Eckert Kehr, *Economic Interest, Militarism, and Foreign Policy*, Gordon A. Craig, ed., Grete Heinz, trans. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 62-63.

[40] Richard Ned Lebow, "The Paranoia of the Powerful: Thucydides on World War III," *PS* 17 (Winter 1984), 10-17.

[41] Bernard N. Grofman and Edward N. Muller, "The Strange Case of Relative Gratification and Potential for Political Violence: The V-Curve Hypothesis," *American Political Science Review* 67 (June 1973), 514-39.

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TABLE 2
ALTERNATIVE MEASURES OF ATTENTION

INTERACTION-BASED MODELS	
Model I:	Distance
Model II:	Diplomatic Exchanges (symmetric)
Model III:	IGO Memberships
Model IV:	Incidents and Disputes (adversaries and partners)
Model V:	Conflict of Interest (high agreement or high disagreement)
CONFLICT-BASED MODELS	
Model VI:	Incidents and Disputes (adversaries only)
Model VII:	Conflict of interest (high disagreement only)

TABLE 3
PERFORMANCE OF VARIOUS ATTENTION MODELS

	CUTOFF	WW	$W\overline{W}$	$\overline{W}W$	$\overline{W}\overline{W}$	ERR	∇	SCOPE
INTERACTION-BASED MODELS								
I	2,000 mi.	59	40,339	12	38,251	.169	.652	.486
II	none	51	50,577	13	64,946	.203	.639	.562
III	none	40	62,305	19	25,232	.322	−.122	.288
IV	50 yrs.	70	21,804	2	147,443	.028	.968	.871
V	1.051	35	23,360	5	3,967	.125	.139	.145
CONFLICT-BASED MODELS								
VI	50 yrs.	61	14,204	11	155,033	.153	.833	.916
VII	.55	29	23,320	11	4,007	.275	−.873	.145

For key, see Table 1.

sistence of long-lived "structural" conflicts for which disputes serve as visible manifestations. The fact that the pure interaction version performs better than the conflict version suggests that simple participation in international incidents and disputes is more important than directed conflict in identifying salient targets. These results are consistent with Midlarsky's finding that the pattern of international disputes is closely related to the pattern of subsequent wars; they are also consistent with the findings of a more limited study by Houweling and Siccama that the probability of serious disputes' escalating to war is only slightly less than the probability of war emerging from a situation characterized by both a serious dispute and an arms race.[42]

[42] Manus I. Midlarsky, "Preventing Systemic War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 28 (De-

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Interaction-based models that employ a more generalized notion of salience (distance, diplomatic representation, common IGO membership, participation in a set of alliances) clearly do not perform as well as those that treat previous acts of low-level violence as uniquely salient to decision makers.[43] The relatively large number of prediction errors made by the conflict-of-interest model suggests that a given set of alliances does not succeed in "internalizing" all of the potential conflicts in the system; the low scope occurs because most states are not in formal alliances most of the time, and hence can not be assigned a high conflict-of-interest score.

The Choice Filter (Filter 3)

The third filter is designed to capture the actual decision to initiate.

Table 4
Results for Relative Capabilities Filter

Parameter values	WW	$W\overline{W}$	$\overline{W}W$	$\overline{W}\overline{W}$	ERR	∇	SCOPE
$p = .35$ Allies = 1	59	17,974	11	3,830	.157	.105	.178

For key, see Table 1.

The performance of Filter 3 is clearly not as impressive as the performance of Filters 1 and 2. The absolute number of errors generally is high; although many models have a positive ∇, it is clear that the performance of this filter leaves much to be desired. The best performer is a single-threshold model, relying only on military personnel as a capability indicator, and counting defense pacts and ententes. This version performed best when the largest ally on either side was counted as a potential entrant.

Although Bueno de Mesquita labels his model as an expected-utility model, we can also categorize it as one that is dominated by consideration of alliances. The structure of alliances determines the conflicts of interests and partly also the relative capabilities of any two sets of potential adversaries. In our filter, alliances play a more modest role: they are incorpo-

cember 1984), 563-84; Henk W. Houweling and Jan G. Siccama, "The Arms Race—War Relationship: Why Serious Disputes Matter," *Arms Control* 2 (September 1981), 157-97.

[43] If we set the cutpoint at the "region" as defined by Bueno de Mesquita (an ad hoc modification of geographic regions) we obtain the following results: WW = 71; $W\overline{W}$ = 78,590; $\overline{W}W$ = 1; $\overline{W}\overline{W}$ = 90,647; ERR = .014; ∇ = .974; SCOPE = .535.

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rated into the assessment of relative capabilities. We have observed, however, that it generally makes little difference exactly how we count allies; the results of our treatment of alliances in Filter 3 indicate that the location of the cutpoint demarcating allies postulated to join a conflict versus those postulated to stay out did not have much effect on the results. The relatively stronger performance when capabilities are defined in narrow military terms is generally consistent with Realist thinking; it suggests that decision makers assign more weight to those capabilities that have an immediate effect on military success. Industrial productive capacity and demographic advantages take time to mobilize; existing military forces do not take nearly as much.

The prediction errors of Filter 3 (listed in Appendix 1) have two striking characteristics. The wars tend to be regional conflicts, and a substantial number of the errors are generated when a nonactivated government initiates a war against a weaker activated opponent. This combination of factors among the errors suggests that the next stage of the research should use a regional frame of reference for measuring aspirations and performance.

Overall Results and Discussion

The three filters and the overall results are summarized in Table 5. Although we argue that the order in which the filters are executed bears a loose resemblance to actual organizational decision-making processes, these results do not provide any support for such an assertion. When we ran the model with the different possible permutations of the filters, the results obtained were almost identical to the original model.[44]

The overall results of our model are partially supportive of Realist thinking. In both the activation and the choice filters, narrower definitions of capabilities proved more fruitful for predictive purposes than broader definitions, suggesting that deliberations about the use of force are to some degree detached from considerations of the wider capabilities of the respective potential adversaries. The finding (from the analysis of the various attention filters) that the history of incidents and disputes is a relatively potent predictor for the outbreak of war suggests that it is not interaction in general, but rather those interactions in which the conflict levels have previously risen to a point where some disruption of routine interactions has occurred, that are the most likely sources of new wars.

[44] In no permuted version did the accuracy of the war predictions change; the largest shift in scope occurred when we ran the sequence 2-1-3. This increased the final scope by 18 cases, an improvement of approximately 0.1%.

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There is thus some support for the notion that the outbreak of war can be analyzed in isolation from broader economic and demographic factors. Finally, an analysis of the temporal distribution of our prediction errors reveals that prediction accuracy for the post-1945 period seems to be about the same as for the pre-1945 period, with 22 of 77 wars and 7 of 18 prediction errors occurring in the post-1945 period. This suggests that the effects of the introduction of nuclear weapons and of increasing economic interdependence are not detectable by a relatively crude model such as ours.

There are, however, several areas where our work does not lend support to a Realist perspective. The findings from the activation filter demonstrate that changes in relative capabilities have a relationship to outbreaks of war: nations which accumulate military capabilities at a rate that differs from their aspired level of accumulation are likely to find themselves in wars more often than nations which accumulate capabilities at a rate close to their aspiration level. On the other hand, nations which accumulate *economic* capabilities more slowly than they aspire will become involved in war less often than one would predict on the basis of a random draw. The standard Realist fixation on cross-sectional analysis misses these dynamics. In addition, the results from the attention filter suggest that not all the potential axes of conflict find expression within a given alliance system. There are a significant number of prediction errors arising from cases in which states with low conflict-of-interest scores go to war with one another.

Comparison to Bueno de Mesquita's Model

Our approach and that of Bueno de Mesquita differ in a number of respects. His model postulates conflicts arising out of a conscious effort by states to seek gains by going to war; our model treats war as arising out of disparities between aspirations and achievements. By implication, his model postulates continuous scanning of the international environment by each would-be initiator of a conflict, whereas our model treats attention as episodic and narrowly focused. His model filters out cases of potential war by imposing an ad hoc regionalization on the international system so that only a subset of all logically possible wars is considered. Our model endogenizes an analogous process via an attention filter. His model invests heavily in elaborate assumptions about variation in risk-taking propensities and the structure of the international system (expressed in terms of alliance patterns). Our model makes no assumptions about risk-taking propensities, and considers alliances only in the context

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TABLE 5
SUMMARY OF OVERALL MODEL AND ITS PERFORMANCE

FILTER 1:

State is activated if:

$\text{ASPIRED}_t > \text{PROJECTED}_t$ or $\text{PROJECTED}_t > 1.5\ (\text{ASPIRED}_t)$, where
$\text{ASPIRED}_t = 0.1\ (\text{SHARE}_{t-1} - \text{ASPIRED}_{t-1}) + \text{ASPIRED}_{t-1}$
$\text{PROJECTED}_t = 0.2\ (\text{SHARE}_{t-1} - \text{SHARE}_{t-2}) + \text{SHARE}_{t-1}$

When both states in dyad are not activated, consider the dyad as one in which war is not possible. Otherwise, consider it as a possible-war case.

FILTER 2

If the two nations in question have been involved as allies or adversaries in any dispute in the last 50 years (excepting any dispute leading directly to an ongoing war), consider it as a possible-war case. Otherwise, consider it as a case in which war is not possible.

FILTER 3

$\text{AdjCAP} = \text{CAPABILITIES}^{\log[(\text{miles/miles per day}) + (10 - e)]}$
$p = \text{AdjCAP}_i/(\text{AdjCAP}_i + \text{AdjCAP}_j)$
$\text{AdjCAP}_i = \text{AdjCAP}_{\text{activated state}} + \text{AdjCAP}_{\text{largest ally}}$

If $p \geq .35$, count as a possible-war case. Otherwise, count as a case in which war is not possible.

OVERALL RESULTS

War considered possible and occurs	59
War considered possible and does not occur	17,974
War considered not possible and occurs	18
War considered not possible and does not occur	193,812

of the final stage of the decision process—the calculation of relative capabilities. As a consequence of his treatment of international system structure and conflict of interest in terms of alliance patterns, Bueno de Mesquita's fullfledged model is applicable only in situations where alliances exist, since the pattern of alliances determines the conflict-of-interest scores for each dyad. Our model does not rely on a conflict-of-interest measurement; thus it avoids this particular limitation on its applicability.

Maoz has analyzed the empirical performance of Bueno de Mesquita's

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model in such a way as to make it roughly comparable to the performance of ours.[45] Bueno de Mesquita imposed a regionalization on his data that is not an explicit part of his theory and that has the effect of substantially reducing the number of nation-years under consideration.[46] The time period for his study extends only to 1974, whereas our study extends to 1980. He also attempts to predict the specific national initiator, whereas we attempt to do this only in selected versions of our models.

Bueno de Mesquita correctly predicts war initiation in 65 of 76 cases.[47] Given 90,158 total possible war initiations,[48] with 14 percent of them as situations where expected utility was positive,[49] we have

WW	$W\overline{W}$	$\overline{W}W$	$\overline{W}\overline{W}$	ERR	∇	SCOPE
65	12,557	11	77,525	.145	.831	.860

Following Maoz,[50]

$$p(\text{Initiation} \mid E(U) \geq 0) = 65/12{,}622 = .0051497$$
$$p(\text{Initiation} \mid E(U) < 0) = 11/77{,}296 = .0001423$$

With Bueno de Mesquita's model, a nation classed as a potential initiator is 36.19 times as likely to go war as a nation not so classed.

Consideration of just the first two filters of our model yields the following results:

WW	$W\overline{W}$	$\overline{W}W$	$\overline{W}\,\overline{W}$	ERR	∇	SCOPE
70	21,804	7	189,982	.090	.899	.897

$$p(\text{War} \mid \text{classed as possible}) = 70/21{,}874 = .0032001$$
$$p(\text{War} \mid \text{classed as not possible}) = 7/189{,}989 = .0000368$$

A nation classed as a possible war participant is 86.95 times more likely to go to war than one that is not. In other words, if we know how rapidly, relative to others, a nation is accumulating military capabilities and if we know that nation's history of incidents and disputes, we can predict the likelihood of its being involved in a war in any given year against any given adversary. Our prediction will have more than twice the accuracy of Bueno de Mesquita's model—without engaging in any cross-sectional comparisons of capabilities, and without any information on the alliance system in operation at the time.

Adding the third filter to our model results in additional scope (reduction in the size of the pool of cases where war is deemed possible), but at

[45] Maoz (fn. 3).
[46] Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 2, 1981), 94-96.
[47] *Ibid.*, 129.
[48] Maoz (fn. 3), 27.
[49] Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 2, 1981), 129.
[50] Maoz (fn. 3), Table 2.

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the cost of a significant increase in errors. The third filter shrinks the size of the "war is possible" pool, but it does so at a rate that is not much better than the rate at which it generates errors. In adding Filter 3, we produce the following overall results:

WW	$W\overline{W}$	$\overline{W}W$	$\overline{W}\overline{W}$	ERR	∇	SCOPE
59	17,974	18	193,812	.234	.744	.915

Shrinking the potential-war pool from 21,804 to 17,974 almost triples the overall error rate. Even though Filter 3 has a positive ∇ statistic, the overall effect of adding it to Filters 1 and 2 is to degrade performance:

$$p(\text{War}|\text{classed as possible}) = 59/18{,}033 = .0032717$$
$$p(\text{War}|\text{classed as not possible}) = 18/193{,}830 = .0000928$$

Now, a nation in the "war is possible" category is only 35.26 times as likely as a nation in the "war is not possible" category to be involved in a given war.

In one sense, this is not too disappointing: since the first two filters have cleared away about 90 percent of the possible cases, all the "easy" work has been done. Disposing of the remaining non-war cases will prove to be more of a challenge.

Comparison to Doran and Parsons' Model

The model constructed by Doran and Parsons predicts great-power war occurrences as a function of such a power's movement through a "cycle of relative power" (a regularized pattern of changes in its share of system capabilities). They are interested in the effects of "long-term nonlinear changes in a state's relative power on its propensity for extensive war."[51]

Doran and Parsons measure relative capability shares within a major power system rather than a global system. They postulate an ideal-typical sine curve for a great power's share of capabilities over the long term, and they argue that this curve's inflection and turning points mark occasions where national leaders undergo the "trauma of role change." At such times, they argue, a simple linear projection of capabilities from the near past is most likely to be inaccurate; hence, the expectations of central decision makers are most likely to be violated. That is when such nations are apt to become involved in wars.

[51] Charles F. Doran and Wes Parsons, "War and the Cycle of Relative Power," *American Political Science Review* 74 (December 1980), 947.

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According to Doran and Parsons, wars tend to cluster around the two inflection and the two turning points.[52] More specifically, the first inflection point (where the first derivative—the rate of change in capabilities per unit of time—takes on a local maximum value and the second derivative is zero) is in the region where the number of wars and their magnitude is greatest; the second inflection point (where the first derivative takes on a local minimum and the second derivative is zero) is in the region where the severity and duration of wars is greatest. These findings (particularly the one regarding the number of wars) are consistent with our results. The reason for the consistency is not difficult to see: at the inflections, the rate of change in capability is greatest. Because our aspiration models are based on linear extrapolations, if there ever is a disparity between aspirations and achievements, or between aspirations and projections, it is most likely to occur just after large changes of relative capability have taken place within a short time. Such changes could produce dissatisfaction if they are decreases, and supersatisfaction if they are increases.

Extensions of the Model and Further Research

There are several reasons why a model such as ours is likely to have some erroneous predictions. When nations assess their standing on relative capabilities, they may weight the capabilities of neighbors or rivals more heavily than those of others. A modification of our model that incorporates this feature may eliminate some of the errors we generate (see Appendix 1); we plan to investigate this possibility in the next phase of our research. In addition, we know that "bean counting" as an approach to capability assessment possesses serious limitations: it obviously does not capture qualitative differences between military forces, nor does it capture differences in cost tolerance that could have a substantial effect on the expected outcome of war.[53] In view of the great amounts of situation-specific data that would be required, however, it is a fairly unmanageable task to incorporate these latter considerations into a general model.

Conclusion

A general theory of war initiation based on necessary conditions can and does yield nontrivial results. Using very little information, we can

[52] *Ibid.*, 962.
[53] Steven Rosen, "War Power and the Willingness to Suffer," in Russett (fn. 16), 167-84.

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eliminate about 90 percent of all dyads from consideration as candidates for war at an error rate (7 of 77) that is quite tolerable.

A general theory need not rely on analysis of alliances. Indeed, it cannot rely solely on such an analysis for many cases: in only 37 of 77 wars analyzed by Bueno de Mesquita did his measure of "conflict of interest" (based on alliance configurations) differ from zero.[54] Refining the analysis of alliances will not help to predict all of the wars in which allies are not a factor. However, further work on modeling the behavior of allies is still valuable, partly in order to increase the predictive accuracy of decisions to initiate, but more importantly because it is central to analyzing the decision of allies to intervene in an ongoing conflict.

Our theory of the outbreak of war yields empirical results that are comparable or superior to those of an expected-utility theory, and does so while using fewer heroic assumptions about governments. Although it would be presumptuous of us to argue that we have successfully refuted Bueno de Mesquita's theory, we are confident that we have proposed a reasonable competing alternative theory of the outbreak of war which presents a different view of the conditions for war than does his:

1. Our theory emphasizes capability shifts and divergences between aspirations and achievements over cross-sectional comparisons of power or conflicts of interest.
2. Our theory considers governmental attention to the external environment to be sporadic and drawn toward participants active in the international system rather than continuous and focused on conflicts of interest.
3. A substantial amount of the uncertainty in predicting the outbreak of war can be reduced with the activation and attention filters. Alliances and cross-sectional comparisons of military capabilities provide relatively little additional explanatory leverage.

Although the empirical results cannot prove that our theory is correct, they do remind us that there are alternative ways of conceptualizing human goal-seeking behavior, and that the alternative to expected utility maximization is not necessarily an assumption of irrational or random behavior.

[54] Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 2, 1981), 143.

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Appendix
Wars Not Predicted by the Model

	Filter 1 Errors*
1827	France — Ottoman Empire
1860	Sardinia — Two Sicilies
1937	China — Japan
1971	India — Pakistan
1979	China — Vietnam
	Filter 2 Errors
1866	Prussia — Baden
1979	U.S.S.R. — Afghanistan
	Filter 3 Errors
1823	France — Spain
1849	France — Papal States
1860	Sardinia — Papal States
1897	Ottoman Empire — Greece
1906	Guatemala — El Salvador
1906	Guatemala — Honduras
1907	Honduras — Nicaragua
1956	U.S.S.R. — Hungary
1967	Syria — Israel
1973	Egypt — Israel
1975	Kampuchea — Vietnam

* Because of missing data, Filter 1 did not make predictions on 15 wars: 1851, Brazil – Argentina; 1856, U.K. – Iran; 1863, Columbia – Ecuador; 1866, Prussia – Bavaria; 1919, Rumania – Hungary; 1919, Greece – Turkey; 1920, U.S.S.R. – Poland; 1940, Thailand – France; 1948, Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan – Israel; 1950, North Korea – South Korea; 1962, Egypt – South Yemen.

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DEMOCRACY FROM ABOVE: The Political Origins of Military Dictatorship in Brazil

By YOUSSEF COHEN*

THE argument of this paper is that the emergence of military dictatorships such as the Brazilian regime of 1964 is not caused by an economic crisis of dependent capitalist development. It results, rather, from the political polarization and radicalization of the democratic regime by which it is preceded. The origins of such a polarization may be found in the process by which Latin American democracies such as that of Brazil (1946-1964) are created. Because they are handed down from above, such democracies are prone to polarization and radicalization. The particular tensions of these democracies work against their transformation into stable democratic regimes. Instead, democracies from above favor the emergence of modern forms of autocracy.

These conclusions were reached by studying the emergence of the Brazilian military regime of 1964; the present paper will therefore be concerned only with that case. It will demonstrate the weakness of economic explanations and propose a political one for the case of Brazil. Since this case is paradigmatic of economic explanations of military autocracy, however, the argument is sure to apply more widely. Even if it does not, this preliminary exercise should stimulate more research on the political roots of contemporary military autocracies.

Economic Explanations

Economic explanations present the emergence of military autocracy as the result of two contradictory aspects of dependent capitalist, or import-substituting, industrialization. On one hand, the exuberant growth of such industrialization in its early phase both encourages and absorbs the increasing demands of the lower classes. On the other hand, the inherent

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limits of such industrialization eventually lead to a drastic decline in the rate of economic growth. To survive, dependent capitalism must therefore generate a military autocracy to contain the rising demands of the lower classes. According to economic explanations, that is what happened in Brazil in 1964. The economic recession Brazil experienced in the early sixties is attributed to a crisis of import-substituting industrialization, and it is seen as the cause of the military coup. There are three basic versions of this argument.

One group of authors saw the source of the problems in the difficulties of industrializing by substituting for imports of consumer durables and luxury goods.[1] These analysts argued that the slowdown of the economy was caused by the limits imposed on the size of the market for such goods by the prevailing distribution of income. Since none but the middle and upper classes could acquire goods such as automobiles, growth could proceed only if the increase in income was channeled to those classes at the expense of workers. The solution to the crisis was therefore a further concentration of income in the hands of the upper classes. Because the exuberant growth of the easy phase of import substitution had fostered an increase in the power of workers to make demands as well as in the volume of demands itself, the solution to the crisis required the coercive hand of a military regime.

A second conjecture is the one proposed by O'Donnell.[2] For him, the decline in growth was caused by the difficulty of "deepening" the economy—that is, of substituting for imports of capital goods and achieving a vertical integration of the economic structure. The early, easier phase of substituting for consumer goods had been exhausted, and the resumption of growth through a deepening of the economy required new investments of a size and a period of maturation, as well as a level of technological sophistication, that were far beyond the capacity of the national

[1] The best-known proponents of this argument are Celso Furtado, *Análise do Modelo Brasileiro* [Analysis of the Brazilian Model] (Rio: Civilização Brasileira, 1972), and Rui M. Marini, *Subdesarollo y revolución* [Underdevelopment and revolution] (Mexico City: Siglo Vientiuno, 1969); *Dialéctica de la dependencia* [Dialectics of dependency] (Mexico City: Nueva Era, 1973). Also see Kenneth P. Erickson and Patrick V. Peppe, "Dependent Capitalist Development, U.S. Foreign Policy, and Repression of the Working Class in Chile and Brazil," *Latin American Perspectives* 3 (No. 3, 1976), 19-44.

[2] Guillermo A. O'Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism: Studies in South American Politics* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1973); O'Donnell, "Corporatism and the Question of the State," in James M. Malloy, ed., *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977), 47-87; O'Donnell, "Reflections on the Patterns of Change in the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian State," *Latin American Research Review* 13 (No. 1, 1978), 3-38; O'Donnell, "Tensions in the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian State and the Question of Democracy," in David Collier, ed., *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 285-318.

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firms of dependent countries. This meant that the deepening of the economy had to be carried out mainly by the state and multinational corporations. In order to muster the enormous resources needed for such a long-term project and to attract foreign capital, however, the level of consumption and the political activity of the working class had to be contained. Since the working class had been permitted to organize during the previous period of economic growth and democracy, its demands were on the rise, and the military regime was necessary to secure the compliance of workers.

The problems with both of these arguments are widely known; a brief recapitulation of the major criticisms is therefore sufficient. As to the first, it is doubtful that the recession of the early sixties was caused by an insufficient concentration of income. Morley and Smith have shown that the effect of income concentration on economic growth was negligible in Brazil.[3] Moreover, to stimulate the consumption of consumer durables it was not even necessary to concentrate income; Brazilian workers spend more than one-third of their income on such goods.[4] Even if it had been necessary, however, it is not clear why a military regime was needed. As Hirschman notes, much growth in consumer-durables industries has occurred in the total absence of authoritarianism.[5] O'Donnell's argument is not supported by the evidence either. The substitution for imported capital goods, or "deepening," decreased rather than increased during the years of recovery that followed the coup.[6] If deepening had anything to do with the recession, it was its cause rather than its cure.

It should also be noted that the coup makers themselves thought that growth depended neither on an increased degree of income concentration nor on a deepening of the economy. They did not pursue a growth strategy based on concentration, and they sought to *un*deepen rather than to deepen the economy because they believed that deepening had already been carried too far.[7] The concentration of income that did in fact occur after the military coup was more an unintended consequence than a

[3] Samuel A. Morley and Gordon W. Smith, "The Effects of Changes in the Distribution of Income on Labor, Foreign Investment and Growth in Brazil," in Alfred Stepan, ed., *Authoritarian Brazil* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 119-41.

[4] For data on the expenditures of workers on consumer durables, see José Serra, "Three Mistaken Theses Regarding the Connection between Industrialization and Authoritarian Regimes," in Collier (fn. 2), 108.

[5] See Albert O. Hirschman, "The Turn to Authoritarianism in Latin America and the Search for Its Economic Determinants," *ibid.*, 81.

[6] For ample evidence supporting this point, see Serra (fn. 4), 117-27. For an extensive and helpful critique and elaboration of O'Donnell's argument, see Robert Kaufman, "Industrial Change and Authoritarian Rule in Latin America: A Concrete Review of the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Model," in Collier (fn. 2), 165-254.

[7] See Serra (fn. 4), 127-28; Hirschman (fn. 5), 76.

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planned result of the actions of the policy makers of the military regime.[8]

We are thus left with the third argument concerning the relation between the economic crisis and the military regime; at the heart of it are runaway inflation and a balance-of-payments crisis.[9] It attributes the recession to a decline in the effectiveness of the unorthodox policies pursued at the beginning of import-substituting industrialization—a decline that exacerbated inflation and the shortage of foreign exchange. This unorthodox policy package consisted of using an overvalued exchange rate, in combination with import controls, in order to favor domestic industry at the expense of the export sector. Obviously, this combination cheapened imports of machinery and other materials essential to industry which were given preferential status by the government. The overvalued rate thus favored new industries while decreasing the real income of traditional exporters. In the end, this unorthodox policy package was in fact a shrewd mechanism by which income could be transferred from the traditional export sector to the new industries, albeit at the cost of some inflation.[10]

Eventually, however, unorthodox policies became dysfunctional. As traditional exports lost ground, the overvalued exchange rate aggravated the recurrent disequilibrium of the balance of payments. In turn, the import constraints imposed by the shortage in foreign exchange inhibited further growth because import-substituting industrialization is an import-intensive process. Moreover, inflation ran wildly out of control, mainly because of the abuse of unorthodox measures by policy makers and the profligacy of politicians. Consequently, foreign capital became much scarcer. Thus, unorthodox policies had a negative impact on growth by aggravating inflation and the shortage of foreign exchange.[11] The resumption of growth therefore required an improvement in the balance of payments. Since imports could not be reduced without jeop-

[8] *Ibid.*, 80-81; Serra (fn. 4), 110-11.

[9] For different (though related) variations of this argument, see Thomas E. Skidmore, "Politics and Economic Policy Making in Authoritarian Brazil, 1937-71," in Stepan (fn. 3), 3-46; Skidmore, "The Politics of Economic Stabilization in Postwar Latin America," in Malloy (fn. 2), 149-90; Hirschman (fn. 5); Kaufman (fn. 6); Michael Wallerstein, "The Collapse of Democracy in Brazil," *Latin American Research Review* 15 (No. 1, 1980), 3-40; John Sheahan, "Market-Oriented Economic Policies and Political Repression in Latin America," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 28 (No. 2, 1980), 264-89. For recent empirical studies of the links between authoritarianism, repression, stabilization, and economic growth, see David Pion-Berlin, "Political Repression and Economic Doctrines," *Comparative Political Studies* 16 (April 1983), 37-66, and Youssef Cohen, "The Impact of Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Rule on Economic Growth," *Comparative Political Studies* 18 (April 1985), 123-36.

[10] For greater detail on the functioning of this mechanism, see Albert O. Hirschman, "The Political Economy of Import-Substituting Industrialization in Latin America," in Hirschman, *A Bias for Hope* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), 85-123, at 117.

[11] Hirschman (fn. 5), 73-74.

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ardizing growth, it was necessary to promote exports and encourage the inflow of foreign capital. Both of these strategies required a devaluation of the currency, the dismantling of exchange controls, and stabilization policies to check the disrupting effects of inflation.[12] Such a transition to orthodoxy obviously would hurt many interests—most of all those of the workers by creating unemployment and keeping wages low.[13] Hence the need for a military regime.

Of the three arguments explaining the recession, this last one is the most plausible. The policy makers of the military regime felt that recovery depended on controlling inflation, eliminating price distortions, devaluating the currency, modernizing capital markets, broadening income taxation, fostering and diversifying exports, and attracting foreign capital. They implemented a variety of policies to achieve a transition to orthodoxy; the latter seems to have been, at least in part, responsible for the recovery of the economy.[14] It would seem, then, that the recession of the early sixties was largely caused by the decline in the effectiveness of unorthodox policies, and that the military regime emerged because of the need for stabilization and other more orthodox market-oriented policies.

Although this argument is the most plausible, its validity is doubtful. In the first place, there is some evidence that the decline in growth generated or greatly accentuated the disequilibrium in the balance of payments and the severe inflation of the early sixties, rather than the reverse. It is also possible that the decline in the rate of growth was largely due to a reduction of the rate of investment caused by the political turmoil following Goulart's accession to power in 1961. To the extent that this is the case, one would have to argue that, rather than being the result of the difficulties of import substitution or dependent capitalism, the slowdown of the economy was largely the result of a strictly political crisis. Second,

[12] See Wallerstein (fn. 9), 29.

[13] This argument is slightly different from the others in that the authoritarian regime is thought to be needed to repress not only the lower classes, but also a variety of other social groups, including the bourgeoisie. In assuming a greater autonomy of the military, it fits quite well the broader conjecture that military regimes emerged in the third world in order to increase the autonomy of their respective states, an autonomy that would be necessary to their development. For this argument, see Irving L. Horowitz and Ellen K. Trimberger, "State Power and Military Nationalism in Latin America," *Comparative Politics* 8 (No. 2, 1976), 223-44; Ellen K. Trimberger, *Revolution from Above* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1978).

[14] For the policies adopted by the military regime, and the behavior of the economy after 1964, see Skidmore (fn. 9, Stepan); Albert Fishlow, "Some Reflections on Post-1964 Brazilian Economic Policy," in Stepan (fn. 3), 69-118; Edmar Bacha, "Issues and Evidence on Recent Brazilian Economic Growth," *World Development* 5 (No. 1, 1977), 47-68; Sheahan (fn. 9); Serra (fn. 4); Werner Baer, "The Brazilian Boom of 1968-72: An Explanation and Interpretation," *World Development* 1 (August, 1973), 1-15; Baer, "Brazil: Political Determinants of Development," in Robert Wesson, ed., *Politics, Policies and Economic Development in Latin America* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1984), 53-73.

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it is doubtful that a military regime was necessary to effect a transition to economic orthodoxy. And, even if it had been, it is not at all clear whether the need for such a transition was sufficient to cause the military coup.

The discussion of these problems will reveal the inherent weakness of economic explanations and provide the basis for the formulation of an alternative, political explanation of the emergence of the military regime.

Toward a Political Explanation

An Economic or a Political Crisis?

It seems that unorthodox policies did not contribute much to the decline in the rate of economic growth in the early sixties; at least, they did not do so by exacerbating inflation and the disequilibrium in the balance of payments. As Baer and Kerstenetzky have noted, the decline of the growth rate cannot be linked to import constraints caused by a disequilibrium in the balance of payments.[15] It was the decline of growth that led to the fall in imports, rather than the reverse.

Wallerstein, too, has pointed out that, rather than causing the recession, the severe inflation of the early sixties was itself largely caused by the slowdown of the economy.[16] If that is the case, and the main effects of a decline in the effectiveness of the unorthodox policies are more of a consequence than a cause of the economic slowdown, what then explains the decline in the rate of growth?

According to Werner Baer, a "definitive explanation for the decline in the growth rate is still wanting." Baer maintains that the most reasonable explanation is "to link the growth decline to the political turmoil of the early 1960s," which "resulted in uncertainties about changes in the social structure and economy (especially about the role allowed to the private domestic and foreign sectors) and caused a drastic decline in investment activities."[17] The turmoil to which Baer refers was the result of President

[15] Werner Baer and Isaac Kerstenetzky, "The Brazilian Economy in the Sixties," in Riordan Roett, ed., *Brazil in the Sixties* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1972), Table 8.

[16] Wallerstein draws on Fishlow (fn. 14), as well as on Hirschman's conjectures on inflation, to argue that perhaps the slowdown of growth triggered high levels of inflation as a way to appease the severe social conflict that it generated. For Hirschman's recent version of his earlier sociological theory of inflation, see his "The Social and Political Matrix of Inflation: Elaborations on the Latin American Experience," in Hirschman, *Essays in Trespassing: Economics to Politics and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980). For Wallerstein's argument, see Wallerstein (fn. 9), 25-28.

[17] Baer, "Comment," *Latin American Research Review* 15 (No. 1, 1980), 42; Baer, *A Industrializaçao e o Desenvolvimento Econômico do Brasil* [Industrialization and Economic Development in Brazil] (Rio: FGV, 1983), chap. 9. Baer does not elaborate much on the political turmoil. The elaboration that follows is based on Thomas E. Skidmore, *Politics in Brazil* (Ox-

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Quadros's resignation in 1961, which triggered one of the most severe political crises in Brazilian history because Vice-President Goulart, his legal successor, was unacceptable to many high-ranking officers as well as to powerful civilians. They considered Goulart, the most prominent national leader of the Labor Party, dangerous not only because he was the heir of Vargas's labor populism, but also because he had strong political ties with the left. The military had forced his resignation when he was Vargas's minister of labor in 1954;[18] now the anti-Vargas, right-wing military ministers were trying to block his accession to the presidency. They failed because of a split in their ranks, but they were strong enough to curtail Goulart's powers by having the Congress vote for a parliamentary system. This, in turn, set in motion a process of polarization; in order to regain full presidential powers, Goulart had to cultivate the support of the left even more, which obviously intensified opposition from the right. As Goulart's actions became increasingly associated with the radical left, he also lost the confidence of domestic and foreign investors, as well as that of international financial organizations and of the United States.[19]

The ensuing decline in the rate of growth greatly accelerated the inflationary trend by decreasing governmental revenues at a time when Goulart had to increase expenditures in order to generate popular support. The resulting rapid rise of the budget deficit played a major role in accelerating inflation. From 1959 to 1963, expenditures rose by about 3 percent as a proportion of GDP, while revenues fell by the same amount. On the other hand, inflation rose from 50 percent in 1962 to 75 percent in 1963; in the last months of Goulart's government, prices were rising at an annual rate of over 100 percent.[20] This sharp acceleration in prices fueled the already severe political conflict that followed Quadros's resignation. It triggered bitter wage struggles which polarized the political situation even further. But it would be misleading to view this political crisis, as

ford: Oxford University Press, 1967), chaps. 7 and 8. For another source supporting the arguments of this section, see Peter Flynn, *Brazil: A Political Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1983).

[18] For an account of this episode, which foreshadowed what was to happen after Quadros's resignation, see Skidmore (fn. 17), 112-15.

[19] In other words, it was a classic crisis of business confidence that was largely responsible for the decline in growth. See Charles E. Lindblom, *Politics and Markets* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 170-88. For information on business opposition to Goulart, see Skidmore (fn. 17), 225, 244-52; René A. Dreifuss, *1964: A Conquista do Estado* [1964: The Conquest of the State] (Petrópolis: Vozes, 1981). Also of interest is the concise history of the relation between the state and industrial elites in Renato R. Boschi, *Elites Industriais e Democracia* [Industrial Elites and Democracy] (Rio: Graal, 1979), and Eli Diniz and Renato R. Boschi, *Empresariado Nacional e Estado no Brasil* [National Entrepreneurs and the State in Brazil] (Rio: Forense-Universitaria, 1978).

[20] Alfred Stepan, *The Military in Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 139-41.

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economic explanations do, as the result of the decline in growth and the ensuing inflation. The economic crisis was itself originally triggered by the political crisis generated by Quadros's resignation, and it merely aggravated the political situation.

Even if the decline in the growth rate had been part of the cyclical nature of economic growth, or partly the result of the usual difficulties of import substitution, my analysis implies that, but for Quadros's resignation and Goulart's succession, such a decline would have been far less severe. In other words, it is likely that the political crisis that followed Quadros's resignation transformed these problems into a severe economic crisis. Economic explanations are therefore mistaken in considering the economic crisis of the sixties to have been a structural crisis inherent to import-substituting, or dependent capitalist, industrialization; dependent capitalist development could have proceeded without a military regime had it not been for the political turmoil that followed Quadros's resignation.

The Necessity of Military Autocracy

Although the political crisis was ultimately responsible for the emergence of the military regime, it could still be argued that this was so only because the political crisis generated an economic one. But that is not the case. The military regime probably was *not* necessary to implement stabilization and other market-oriented policies, and the military probably would not have intervened if it had been merely a matter of stabilizing the economy. The economic crisis was important, if at all, only because it aggravated the political crisis that caused it. In the end, it was the unfolding of the political crisis itself that led to the coup.

There is no need to expect that, whenever stagflation sets in, Latin American countries will seek a solution in an autocratic form of government. Indeed, most Latin American states have recently turned to democracy in the midst of acute inflation and a severely depressed economy. Nor is there any reason to believe that only autocratic regimes can effect a successful transition to economic orthodoxy. In the sixties both Colombia, during the Restrepo administration, and Chile, under Frei, saw a successful transition to market-oriented policies while a democratic regime was in power.[21]

Can it be said, nevertheless, that in the particular case of Brazil stabilization required the coercive hand of military autocracy? I do not think so. Although it is true that Goulart had only a slim chance of successfully

[21] Hirschman (fn. 5), 79.

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stabilizing the economy, it is possible that he could have done so. And even if he could not, his successors would have had a good chance of implementing a stabilization program or effecting a transition toward orthodoxy under a democratic regime.

It is true that Goulart's attempt to stabilize the economy during the first half of 1963 failed largely because of the intense polarization of the political system. But it also failed in part because of Goulart's ambition to become a major historical figure.[22] In his stabilization plan, the Dantas-Furtado three-year plan, Goulart had proposed "basic reforms" of great magnitude; the extremists at the right therefore accused him of wanting to subvert the existing order. They proclaimed that his stabilization measures were half-hearted, and that his real motive was to impose revolutionary changes involving the distribution of wealth, power, and property. The left, on the other hand, accused Goulart of being half-hearted where the reforms were concerned, and maintained that his real motive was to please the capitalists and the imperialist powers by furthering the exploitation of workers through his stabilization program. His stabilization measures were also strongly opposed by the usual interest groups of businessmen, workers, middle-class professionals, civil servants, and even military officers, all of whom wanted to avoid paying their share of the cost of stabilization. Under all this pressure, Goulart abandoned the three-year plan in June 1963, hardly six months after it had been proposed.

It is possible that Goulart could have seen this plan through all of this pressure, but he was bored by the technical issues of stabilization, which were too banal to confer upon him the status of a major historical figure. He had always been much more attracted by the dramatic idea of the basic reforms advocated by the left. It was only natural, then, that he finally put all of his efforts into campaigning for such reforms and abandoned stabilization when the latter ran into major political trouble. Yet, it is perhaps unfair to blame him for the failure of the plan. Even if Goulart had been strong and humble, the fact that he was unacceptable to the right would probably have doomed his attempt at stabilizing the economy.

Still, there is no reason to infer an immediate need for a military regime. Goulart's term ended in 1965, and he was ineligible for reelection. Of the five presidential candidates for 1965, only one, Miguel Arraes (who was not likely to win), would probably have been unacceptable to the right.[23] The others were in principle perfectly capable of implementing at least a moderately successful anti-inflationary program.

[22] Skidmore (fn. 17), 248-52, 267.

[23] *Ibid.*, 273-76.

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Why, then, were the military and civilian conspirators unwilling to wait for the end of Goulart's legal term in office? The answer is that they probably would have waited if Goulart had chosen a different course of action. As Skidmore notes, there were three possible courses of action open to Goulart after the failure of the stabilization program.[24] He could have played the extremes off against each other to justify his governing with emergency powers. This strategy was too risky because he would have had to rely on the military at the expense of organized labor, his most important base of support. The second possibility was to maintain as unthreatening a stance as possible by alternating concessions between the groups in conflict. Goulart did not follow this rather passive strategy largely because of his ambition to make the history books as a major leader. The third option was to turn to the radical reforms of the extreme left. Even after he had unambiguously made this choice, however, a large contingent of military and civilian moderates were still unwilling to depose him: the politicians had a vested interest in electoral politics, and the military were afraid of internal divisions such as those of 1961.[25] These moderates joined the active conspirators only when it became clear that Goulart was stepping outside the bounds of the democratic process.

Goulart's unmistakable turn to the radical left came at a massive rally on March 13, 1964, in Rio de Janeiro.[26] During that rally, he launched a campaign for broad structural and political reforms involving land tenure and distribution, the nationalization of foreign enterprises, the enfranchisement of illiterates and enlisted servicemen, and the legalization of the Communist Party. He also maintained that the Constitution had to be revised because it was obsolete and stood in the way of his reforms, which would create a more just and human society. Finally, he and his brother-in-law, Leonel Brizola, made it clear that their strategy was to gain sufficient mass support to bypass Congress, or even to close it; they would carry out reforms by decree if Congress continued to block the sweeping changes they believed the Brazilian people wanted.[27] Between

[24] *Ibid.*, 266-67.

[25] In 1961, the military ministers who attempted to block Goulart's accession to the presidency were openly opposed by the commander of the Third Army from Rio Grande do Sul, General Machado Lopes. This split later became a major deterrent against an attempt to overthrow Goulart. See Alfred Stepan, "Political Leadership and Regime Breakdown: Brazil," in Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, eds., *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 121-22.

[26] For a concise account of Goulart's change in strategy beginning in mid-March of 1964, see *ibid.*, 123-25. Also see Skidmore (fn. 17), 284-302.

[27] The usual argument concerning Congress was that it acted as a conservative body against the progressive policies of the Executive. Wanderley G. dos Santos has challenged this thesis, arguing that the Congress was fragmented and polarized, and suffering from decisional paralysis rather than conservatism. See his "The Calculus of Conflict: Impasse in Brazilian Politics and the Crisis of 1964," Ph.D. diss. (Stanford University, 1979).

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the rally on March 13 and his annual message to Congress on March 15, in which he presented his program for basic reforms, Goulart had managed to intensify the fear of landowners, businessmen, foreign capitalists, congressmen, and military officers. Even the moderate left and the military and civilians of the center were beginning to withdraw their support. Still, it was not until Goulart's outright challenge of the military hierarchy during the naval mutiny on March 26 that the officers were unified and the moderates were persuaded that it was necessary to depose the President.[28]

To repeat: if Goulart had chosen a more moderate course of action, stabilization might have been achieved within a democratic context. Since the military hesitated to intervene even after Goulart had threatened the whole structure of power of Brazilian society, it is hard to see why they would have done so merely too stabilize the economy.[29]

The Political Determinants of Military Regimes

Together, the foregoing arguments suggest that the decline in the growth rate, as well as the military coup, were the result of political polarization and ultimately of the radicalization of Brazilian politics. This poses a major problem for the general argument underlying economic explanations of military regimes, and opens the way for an alternative political explanation.

According to the economic explanations, military regimes emerged because the inherent structural weaknesses of dependent capitalist industrialization led to a decline in the rate of economic growth. They emerged in order to contain the rising demands of the lower classes that could no longer be accommodated because of the reduced rate of growth.[30] Since,

[28] When the naval minister tried to quell the mutiny, Goulart dismissed him instead of backing him, and allowed the labor leadership, which was clearly associated with the Communist Party, to participate in the choice of the new minister. That was too much even for the nationalist supporters of Goulart within the army. See Skidmore (fn. 17), 297, and Stepan (fn. 25), 130-31.

[29] The officers who led the coup would never have intervened merely to stabilize the economy. They clearly stated that they would only intervene if Goulart overstepped the boundaries of constitutionality. Their main motive was to stop Goulart and the left from using organized labor to overturn the constitutional structure—as the central document of the anti-Goulart conspiracy, the memorandum circulated by Castelo Branco on March 20, made clear. See Skidmore (fn. 17), 295. For greater detail on Castelo Branco's and other leaders' motives for staging the coup, see Ronald M. Schneider, *The Political System of Brazil: Emergence of a Modernizing Authoritarian Regime* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), and Luis Viana Filho, *O Governo Castelo Branco* [Castelo Branco's Government] (Rio: José Olympio, 1975). For a detailed study on the political attitudes of Brazilian elites, see Peter J. McDonough, *Power and Ideology in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

[30] An alternative, equivalent way of saying this is that, with the "exhaustion," or crisis, of

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as we have seen, the rate of growth declined actually because of a political crisis involving the rise in the demands of the lower classes, economic explanations have to be corrected.

The argument should now be that military regimes emerged because the growing demands of the lower classes *themselves*, rather than any structural weaknesses of the economy, led to a decline in the rate of growth. According to this corrected version, the threat to capitalism comes from the political organization of the lower classes and their demands, rather than from the inherent problems of dependent capitalist development. Even this corrected view, however, is far from accurate.

As such, the demands of the lower classes could not have led to the emergence of military autocracy. As we have seen, the military coup in Brazil was a response to the double threat of radical reforms and the use of extraconstitutional means to implement them. We know, however, that the demands of the lower classes were much narrower and less radical. Even economic explanations recognize this fact when they refer to wages and prices as the object of the workers' demands. There are several sources which confirm that this was indeed the case. Erickson has shown that, in the early sixties, Brazilian workers were motivated to strike by bread-and-butter issues, not by political ones, and Weffort has noted that workers were upset with their leaders because the latter gave priority to demands for reform, neglecting bread-and-butter issues.[31] There is also a considerable body of survey evidence showing that urban lower classes had little interest in the broader issues of reform, the nature of which they

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the easy phase of import-substituting industrialization, the populist class coalition fell apart. The populist class compromise was possible because of the exuberant growth of the easy phase; with the decline in growth, the lower classes had to be excluded both politically and economically. This is how O'Donnell, Erickson, and Furtado see it, for instance: see O'Donnell (fn. 2), 55-69; Kenneth P. Erickson, *The Brazilian Corporative State and Working-Class Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 10; and Celso Furtado, "Political Obstacles to the Economic Development of Brazil," in Claudio Veliz, *Obstacles to Change in Latin America* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965). Still another way of expressing this thesis is Stepan's; he maintains that the crisis leading to the coup was due to rising demands from the masses when the rate of growth was declining; or, as he puts it, to an increase in the loads of the "distributive capability" of the Brazilian system while its "extractive capability" was decreasing. Stepan (fn. 20), 134-40. Thus, this thesis is shared even by explanations like Stepan's, which give almost equal weight to economic and political factors. The problem with Stepan's otherwise excellent book is that it still gives too much weight to economic factors and fails to show the important causal connection between the rise in demands and the decline in growth. The same is true of Stepan's most recent book, *The State and Society: Peru in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978). On pp. 79-80, he states that both the economic and the political crises were important in bringing about the military coup of 1964, but he never really discusses the causal connection between the two crises, or even ranks them in terms of importance.

[31] See Erickson (fn. 30), 99; Francisco C. Weffort, "Sindicatos e Política" [Unions and Politics], Ph.D. diss. (University of São Paulo, 1972).

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barely understood.[32] Even rural workers viewed land reform in very narrow terms. They wanted mild forms of protection and help from the government rather than a sweeping transformation of the economic and political structure of the countryside. Only a tiny minority of highly politicized workers, mostly in the major urban centers, understood what was involved in the struggle for radical reforms. If this is the case, the narrower demands of the lower classes must have been converted into the broader demands for radical reform before they could trigger the coup.[33] This is the fact that economic explanations conceal, and it is a crucial one. For it is the way in which the political leadership and the political system convert the grievances and demands of the lower classes that determines whether an autocratic regime will emerge or not.[34] If the political leadership had transformed the demands of the Brazilian lower classes in a more moderate way, the military might never have intervened.[35]

Since it was the extreme left that in the end posed the threat of radical reforms through extraconstitutional means, we must understand the process by which the grievances of the urban lower classes were converted by the left into such threatening demands. The extreme left posed the threat that triggered the coup, primarily because of the intense and relentless opposition of the extreme right to Goulart's government. Using well-known strategies of dissensus politics, both extremes quickly polarized a polity stunned by Quadros's surprise resignation. Locked in a

[32] On the attitudes of workers, see Amaury de Souza, "The Nature of Corporative Representation," Ph.D. diss. (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1978); Peter McDonough, "Repression and Representation in Brazil," *Comparative Politics* 14 (October 1982); Youssef Cohen, "The Benevolent Leviathan: Political Consciousness among Urban Workers under State Corporatism," *American Political Science Review* 76 (March 1982); Leôncio M. Rodrigues, *Industrialização e Atitudes Operárias* [Industrialization and the Attitudes of Workers] (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1970). This literature suggests that the radical reforms were only one possible way of articulating the demands from the lower classes.

[33] Obviously, even the narrower demands were already the result of the organization and mobilization of the workers; even these were susceptible to control by the leadership. See Erickson (fn. 30).

[34] Economic explanations of military regimes tend to make the same mistake as their counterpart where the explanation of revolutions is concerned. They fail to take into account factors concerning the political mobilization of mass grievances. Charles Tilly has criticized such explanations in depth; see Tilly, "Does Modernization Breed Revolution?" *Comparative Politics* 5 (No. 4, 1973), 425-27, and "Revolutions and Collective Violence," in Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, eds., *Handbook of Political Science* Vol. III (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1975). For a recent review of resource mobilization theory, see Craig J. Jenkins, "Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements," *Annual Review of Sociology* 9 (1983), 527-53. Also relevant is the compelling analysis of how the organization of the state is related to social revolution; see Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

[35] Maria do Carmo Campello de Souza, in *Estado e Partidos Políticos no Brasil* [The State and Political Parties in Brazil] (São Paulo: Alfa-Omega, 1976), has argued that the party system and Brazilian democracy could have survived the socioeconomic changes of the fifties and early sixties.

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deadly struggle, they jointly preempted a more moderate outcome and brought about the collapse of the democratic regime.

It was the merciless opposition to Goulart by the right-wingers of the National Democratic Union (UDN) that offered the radical left the opportunity to use the grievances of the lower classes in order to increase their power and push their sweeping radical reforms. Goulart needed support from the several groups on the left in order to counter the right's attempt to block his accession in 1961; later, he needed it again to recover his full presidential powers. In exchange, Goulart helped the leftist groups gain much power within the corporative labor structure and allowed them to build their own overarching inter-union organizations.[36]

When Goulart regained full powers in the beginning of 1963, however, he parted company with the extreme left. By that time he had decided to follow the more moderate course of action outlined by the Dantas-Furtado Three-Year Plan, which, as we have seen, was strongly opposed by the extreme left. To neutralize it as well as his enemies on the right, Goulart's strategy was to forge an alliance between a small group of moderate leftists and the center. He failed mainly because the extreme left used the resources it had accumulated during the previous year to discredit Goulart with the center. The groupings at the left astutely mobilized the economic grievances of the lower classes and skillfully manipulated strikes and demonstrations, both to show Goulart that he needed their help and to destroy the President's coalition.[37] Using dissensus politics, they led the center to demand that Goulart choose between its program and that of the left. Pressured by center, left, and right, amid extreme political polarization, Goulart swung back to what he thought was his strongest base of support, the left.

When Goulart adopted the strategy of the extreme left, which consisted of mobilizing popular pressure to force Congress to pass radical reforms, both the extreme left and the extreme right got what they wanted: between them, they prevented him from obtaining support from the center. Once the extreme left had enlisted the President to lead its aggressive

[36] For details on the major groupings of the left as well as on the major inter-union organizations that played an important role in the process of polarization, see Skidmore (fn. 17), 223-28, 276-84, and Timothy F. Harding, "The Political History of Organized Labor in Brazil," Ph.D. diss. (Stanford University, 1973), chaps. 9 and 10.

[37] According to Erickson, labor leaders had relatively little control over the rank and file. They appeared more powerful than they really were because they took advantage of special circumstances—such as the deteriorating economic conditions of the early sixties, which were quite independent from their organizational control—to call strikes and demonstrations, which they then used for their own political purposes. Goulart finally swung to the left because he believed that he could not afford to lose the support of the left and its labor clientele. See Erickson (fn. 30), 99, 148.

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campaign for reforms, the extreme right got the moderates to join it in forming the grand civil-military coalition that ousted the President.[38]

Goulart's final turn to the left was due not only to the left's own power and strategy, but largely to the fact that most moderate congressmen distrusted his intentions. Because it was widely believed that Goulart wished to amend the Constitution so as to be eligible for reelection in 1965, center politicians who had a stake in the coming elections joined the right to form a coalition to veto *all* proposals for constitutional amendments.[39] Since radical reforms, such as the agrarian, required constitutional changes, they were consequently rejected by Congress.

This formation of a veto coalition had become part of a new pattern of congressional behavior. As dos Santos has shown, Congress had been both reflecting and furthering the increasing polarization of the political system since Quadros's resignation. Fragmented and polarized, Congress either formed momentary veto coalitions or failed altogether to reach relevant decisions.[40] Goulart responded in the usual way. On the one hand, he tried to change parliamentary coalitions by changing his cabinet; on the other, he tried to pressure Congress from the outside. The first strategy tended to produce administrative chaos, while the second polarized the political system even further.[41] Finally, as we have seen, despairing of influencing Congress by any other means, Goulart opted for the strategy of the extreme left—namely, massive popular mobilization to pressure Congress into pursuing reforms.[42] Both he and the extreme left, however, greatly overestimated their power over the masses. The left was divided and had barely begun to organize the masses for any serious confrontation with their opponents. Goulart found that out the hard way when almost no popular resistance could be mobilized against the military coup.[43]

Ironically, then, the intransigence of the right allowed the radical left

[38] Stepan (fn. 20), chap. 5, has shown that successful military coups have occurred only when the military had strong civilian support. By 1964, the Brazilian military knew that this was the case (see fn. 25).

[39] See W. G. dos Santos (fn. 27), 94-97, 190-93, 232-33.

[40] According to W. G. dos Santos, the deadlock and polarization were produced not so much by a conservative reaction of Congress to the reforms; rather, a decisional paralysis was caused by, and exacerbated, the fragmentation and polarization of the party system. W. G. dos Santos shows that after Quadros's resignation, the system moved toward what Sartori has called "a situation of *polarized pluralism*." See fn. 27, chaps. 1 and 2, and Giovanni Sartori, "European Political Parties: The Case of Polarized Pluralism," in Joseph LaPalombara, ed., *Political Parties and Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966). For a similar argument linking polarization and the breakdown of Chilean democracy, see Arturo Valenzuela, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Chile* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

[41] W. G. dos Santos (fn. 27), 186-236.

[42] Stepan (fn. 25), 123.

[43] *Ibid.*, 124; Skidmore (fn. 17), 276-84, 294-302.

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to convert the narrower grievances and demands of the lower classes into a demand for radical reforms. By enlisting the President to lead the campaign for those reforms, the left was able to catapult them to the forefront of the national agenda for the first time in the history of Brazil. But since the leftist groups were far from having the power to push their reforms beyond that point, they played straight into the hands of the extremists at the right, who saw in the campaign for radical reforms an excellent justification for the military coup. The intransigence of the extreme right thus combined with the irresponsibility of the extreme left to usher in a dictatorship that ultimately proved to be disastrous to the interests of both extremes.

Thus, the coup occurred because the political system could not generate a moderate solution to the crisis caused by Quadros's resignation. It allowed the extremes to dominate the political process in a way that proved fatal to democracy. It was the way in which the system transformed them, rather than the rise in the demands of the lower classes, that brought about the military regime. And it was the weakness of the democratic political system, rather than some structural flaw of dependent capitalist industrialization, that ultimately led to the emergence of a military autocracy.

Democracy from Above and Its Consequences

If the proximate causes of military autocracy are to be sought in the polarization and radicalization of the political system, the question that follows naturally is, what causes polarization? A full answer cannot be given here. Nevertheless, I shall venture a sketchy answer, the essence of which is that, like the Brazilian democracy, some Latin American democracies have a tendency for polarization and radicalization because they are born from above. Again, I hope my discussion of the Brazilian case will be useful for understanding others.

In Latin America as well as in most third-world countries, it is the state rather than an entrepreneurial bourgeoisie that plays the major role in launching and sponsoring capitalist industrialization.[44] For this reason,

[44] This is not to say that the state played an insignificant role in the industrial revolution of Europe. The questioning of the myth of the "laissez faire" state goes back at least to Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1944). Even though the state no doubt had an important role in early industrialization, it had a far more central one in later industrialization, especially in third-world countries. For the role of the state among late developers, see Alexander Gerschenkron, "Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective," in Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), 5-30; Fernando H. Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and Development* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979); Fernando H. Cardoso, *Empresário In-*

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the entrepreneurial classes are usually both economically and politically weaker in the third world than they were in Western Europe at the equivalent period of development. Although the rising European bourgeoisie, and later the working class, were able to limit the power of the state, their third-world counterparts are usually too dependent on the state to be either willing to do the same or capable of doing so. As a consequence, rather than being the result of protracted struggles involving all classes and the state, democracy often comes to the independent and industrializing third-world countries *from above*[45]—that is, as a "gift" from a powerful state elite to a rather powerless society.[46] In other words, the political elite of these countries delivers democracy to the people before any group in society has enough power to extract democratic rights from the state.

There is a variety of motivations for such a gift. In some cases, a world event may precipitate the advent of democracy. In Brazil, for instance, the shifting tide of World War II in favor of the Allies played a major role in the demise of Vargas's dictatorship. In other cases, direct pressures from major powers, coupled with intra-elite conflicts, may lead to democracy. The views of the dictatorial elites concerning the future of their countries may also play an important role. Elites may see democratization as inevitable, or they may find it necessary to the achievement of economic development or other goals. Whatever the motivation, in many third-world countries democracy was handed down to society rather than won through a struggle by major groups in society.

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dustrial e Desenvolvimento Econômico no Brasil [The Industrial Entrepreneur and the Economic Development of Brazil] (São Paulo: Difusão Européia do Livro, 1964); Peter Evans, *Dependent Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979); Trimberger (fn. 13); Hirshman (fn. 10).

[45] I am obviously excluding cases where democracy is imposed by military conquest or is brought about as a part of a struggle for national independence against a colonial power.

[46] For a clear statement on some of the ways in which state-dominated societies shape the character of the democracies they engender, see Atul Kohli, "Democracy and Development," in John P. Lewis and Valeriana Kallab, eds., *Development Strategies Reconsidered* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1986), 153-82. A number of other scholars have noted that democracy often comes as a "gift" to third-world nations. See Alain Touraine, "Industrialisation et Conscience Ouvrière à São Paulo" [Industrialization and Working-Class Consciousness in São Paulo], *Sociologie du Travail* 3 (No. 4, 1961), 77-95; Francisco C. Weffort, "State and Mass in Brazil," in Irving L. Horowitz, ed., *Masses in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971); Dankwart A. Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model," *Comparative Politics* 2 (April 1970), 337-63. Rustow makes an explicit connection between the gift-like character of democracy in the third world and the likelihood that it will degenerate into an autocratic regime. He argues that democracies that skip the stage of *struggle* leading to democracy will be unstable and likely to relapse into authoritarianism. His example is Turkey, which "paid the price in 1960," when democracy was interrupted by a military coup, "for having its first democratic regime as a free gift from the hands of a dictator." *Ibid.*, 362. Rustow does not elaborate on this point, however. It would be interesting to find out whether the dynamics of the Turkish case resemble those of the formation of a democracy from above in Brazil.

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It is to a large extent because democracies from above are a "gift" from political elites that they are prone to failure and often collapse. Although the path to democracy from above is usually more peaceful and briefer than that of the older European democracies, it offers opportunities to the political elite of the old regime that are ultimately detrimental to the survival of the new democratic regime.[47] Since the dominant elite faction of the old regime is the most influential group involved in the relatively peaceful transition to democracy, it is often in a position to perpetuate its power in the new electoral system by using the enormous resources of the state that are under its control. To the extent that it is successful, it will preserve the source of its power and the high degree of concentration of power in the hands of the state, as well as its own near-monopoly over the dominant positions of the state. This means that society will remain weak in relation to the state; democratic rights can therefore be withdrawn almost as easily as they were delivered. Although such a possibility greatly constrains the democratic process, it is not necessarily fatal to democracy unless it is combined with a second consequence flowing from the old elite's ability to perpetuate its dominance.

In perpetuating its power by electoral means, the old elite not only preserves a state-dominated society; it also excludes both the disgruntled elites of the old regime and the leaders of the newly enfranchised groups who had hoped to gain influence through the electoral system. The old elite is able to beat its opposition by taking advantage of its control over the organizational and patronage resources of the state in order to mobilize a wide range of votes from all classes, including those from the lower classes. This broad range of voters, however, eventually makes the old elite vulnerable: in trying to juggle the diverse and conflicting interests of its electoral base, the old elite is bound to displease at least some of its voters some of the time. The difficulty of holding together a broad electoral base gives the opposition on the left and on the right an opportunity to undermine the old elite. Not only will they seize the opportunity to steal voters from it, but their continual defeat in the electoral arena is

[47] The argument that I am about to develop is congruent with Dahl's conjectures concerning the path to democracy that he labels as a "shortcut" to democracy. This path is characterized by a sudden transformation of the old regime into a full-blown democracy. Unlike the European countries that took the more gradual path, countries that take the shortcut will engender democracies that are susceptible to failure. According to Dahl, this is because the shortcut does not give elites the chance to develop a system of mutual guarantees before the great diversity of social groups is incorporated through universal suffrage. Consequently, severe conflict is likely because the groups among which a system of mutual guarantees has to be developed will no longer be small and relatively homogeneous elites; they will now include the leaders of the different groups that were suddenly incorporated through universal suffrage. See Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), chap. 3.

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also likely to drive them to denounce the political system as a sham, and, increasingly, to use nondemocratic means of opposition. The right will accuse the old elite of giving in to the lower classes and the left, and will play up the left's insurrectionary threats. In this way, it attempts to scare upper- and middle-class voters away from the dominant elite, and ultimately to form a right-wing coalition to seize power through a coup. The left will accuse the old elite of giving in to the upper classes and the right, and will play up the right's threats to stage a coup. In doing so, the left attempts to steer lower-class voters away from the old elite, and ultimately to enlist enough support to topple the regime.

The dominant elite is thus forced to swing ever more widely between the extremes, neutralizing each concession to one group of voters with a concession to the other. As a result, it is likely to lose its credibility, thereby further strengthening its opponents on both sides. The left and the right can thus effectively use each other to divide the center, strengthen themselves, and displace the dominant elite. But they can only succeed by denigrating the democratic system as a sham, by exaggerating each other's threats to use nondemocratic means, and by actually resorting to nondemocratic means of political action. In so doing, they are likely to bring about a polarization and radicalization of the political system that favors the emergence of modern forms of autocracy. Thus, by offering the political elite of the old regime the opportunity to maintain its monopoly of power by electoral means, democracy from above triggers a process of polarization that is likely to lead to the emergence of an autocratic regime.[48] That is what happened in Brazil.

The Brazilian democracy of 1946 was a democracy from above. At the end of the dictatorship of the Estado Novo, in 1945, Brazil had clearly become a state-dominated society. The state had been greatly expanded since 1930; by 1945, the central state apparatus had accumulated enough power to make major decisions almost unburdened by pressures from society. Consequently, Brazilian society was too powerless in the forties to extract democratic rights from the state. Democracy came from above, instead, as a result of international events.[49]

[48] My sketch of the links between "state-dominated society," "democracy from above," and polarization draws on the pioneering studies of the Brazilian system by Campello de Souza (fn. 35) and W. G. dos Santos (fn. 27).

[49] Alain Touraine (fn. 46), 87, has called the process by which democracy came to Brazil a "democratisation par voie autoritaire." For a detailed history of the last years of Vargas's dictatorship and the inauguration of the Brazilian democracy of 1946, see Skidmore (fn. 17), 39-64; also Campello de Souza (fn. 35), 64. For an interesting explanation of the continuity of Brazilian authoritarianism based on Weber's notion of patrimonialism and Faoro's earlier work, see Simon Schwartzman, "Back to Weber: Corporatism and Patrimonialism in the Seventies," in Malloy (fn. 2), 47-88, and Schwartzman, *Bases do Autoritarismo Brasileiro* [The Bases of Brazilian Authoritarianism] (Rio: Campus, 1982).

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Toward the end of World War II, the political elite that controlled the state apparatus of the Estado Novo realized that, with the coming demise of fascism in Europe, its semi-fascist regime would be in trouble. Rather than resist change, it recognized that it stood to gain from taking the lead in transforming the dictatorship into a democratic regime. This elite understood that the state-dominated character of Brazilian society held the opportunity to perpetuate both its own power and that of the state after the advent of democracy: if democratic rights were granted peacefully, the resources of the state could be used to maintain the structure of power of the old regime even after formal democratic institutions had been introduced. Led by Vargas, the political elite of the old regime therefore promised a return to democracy after the war. In this way, it could reach a compromise with those who were later to form the National Democratic Union (UDN),[50] the most determined enemy of the Vargas camp. This compromise gave the dominant elite much leeway in preparing itself for competition in the new regime.

The Estado Novo had greatly expanded the power of central government over the old state oligarchies and over urban workers, whom it had co-opted through corporative institutions.[51] During the relatively peaceful transition to democracy between 1943 and 1945, the political elite used the resources of this greatly expanded state to forge the broad electoral coalition that would allow it to perpetuate its power in the future regime. In preparation for electoral competition, the men who ran the powerful bureaucracies of the Estado Novo in the states used them, as well as their alliances with the landowners, bankers, and industrialists who had ben-

[50] For documentation, see Campello de Souza (fn. 35), chap. 5. The elite's willingness to cooperate was not only due to Vargas's power and to strategic considerations. Vargas's ability to perpetuate his power was greatly helped by the fact that Brazilian elites shared a basic distrust in democracy, a distrust that ultimately favored the perpetuation of a state-dominated society. For the roots of distrust in democracy, see W. G. dos Santos, *Ordem Burguesa e Liberalismo Político* [Bourgeois Order and Political Liberalism] (São Paulo: Duas Cidades, 1978), and Bolívar Lamounier, "Formação de um Pensamento Político Autoritário na Primeira República" [Formation of an Authoritarian Political Thought in the First Republic], in Boris Fausto, ed., *O Brasil Republicano* [Republican Brazil], Vol. II (Rio: Difel, 1978).

[51] The process by which Vargas extended the power of central government over state oligarchies is described in Campello de Souza (fn. 35), chap. 4. On the corporative labor structure, see Aziz Simão, *Sindicato e Estado* [The Sindicato and the State] (São Paulo: Dominus, 1966); Evaristo de M. Filho, *O Problema do Sindicato Unico no Brasil* [The Problem of the Non-Competitive Sindicato in Brazil] (São Paulo: Alfa-Omega, 1952); Leôncio M. Rodrigues, *Conflito Industrial e Sindicalismo no Brasil* [Industrial Conflict and Unionism in Brazil] (São Paulo: Difusão Européia do Livro, 1966); J. Albertino Rodrigues, *Sindicato e Desenvolvimento no Brasil* [The Sindicato and Development in Brazil] (São Paulo: Difusão Européia do Livro, 1968); Francisco C. Weffort (fn. 31); Philippe C. Schmitter, *Interest Conflict and Political Change in Brazil* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968); Erickson (fn. 30); Kenneth S. Mericle, "Conflict Regulation in the Brazilian Industrial Relations System," Ph.D. diss. (University of Wisconsin, 1974); Amaury de Souza (fn. 32); and Luiz W. Vianna, *Liberalismo e Sindicato no Brasil* [Liberalism and the Sindicato in Brazil] (Rio: Paz e Terra, 1976).

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efited from Vargas's dictatorship, to organize the Social Democratic Party, the PSD. Those who were in charge of the Estado Novo's corporative labor structure, through which the state controlled the working class, used it to form the Labor Party, the PTB.[52] By bringing these two groups together, the political elite of the old regime forged the broad class coalition underlying the electoral alliance between the PSD and the PTB that allowed it to rule virtually unchallenged for the greater part of the democratic period.

While democracy from above favored the old elite led by Vargas, it was highly detrimental to the future of democracy in Brazil. Vargas's gift of democracy to the Brazilian people turned out to be a Trojan horse. The enemies of the political elites of the Estado Novo did not fully realize this until it was already too late. The antistatist liberals of the UDN did not yet see the extent to which the Vargas elite had prepared the ground to perpetuate the state-dominated society that had been the Estado Novo, and, through it, to perpetuate its own power. As both Leff and Weffort have noted, the small elite at the head of the Vargas camp was able to maintain its control over the Executive for the better part of the democratic period by distributing patronage-type benefits through the immense clientelistic network formed by the state bureaucracy, the two major parties, and the corporative labor structure.[53] In this way, it made the most important decisions concerning the country—virtually unencumbered by pressures from the rest of society. In other words, the old elite successfully perpetuated its own power and that of the state while maintaining the weakness of the parties, the party system, interest groups, the legislature and, more generally, of Brazilian society, keeping them dependent on the state.[54]

The success of the political elite of the old regime was adverse to Bra-

[52] On the formation and history of these parties, see Phillys J. Peterson, "Brazilian Political Parties: Formation, Organization and Leadership," Ph.D. diss. (University of Michigan, 1962). See also G. A. Dillon Soares, *Sociedade e Política no Brasil* [Society and Politics in Brazil] (São Paulo: Difusão Européia do Livro, 1973). For a detailed analysis of how Vargas shaped the electoral system, see Campello de Souza (fn. 35), 105-34. For a review of the extensive literature on political parties, see Bolívar Lamounier and M.D.G. Kinzo, "Partidos Políticos, Representação e Comportamento Eleitoral no Brasil, 1946-1978" [Political Parties, Representation and Electoral Behavior in Brazil, 1946-1978], *Dados* (No. 19, 1978).

[53] Nathaniel H. Leff, *Economic Policy-Making and Development in Brazil, 1947-1964* (New York: Wiley, 1968). Weffort (fn. 46), 146, notes that the democratic regime of 1946 was radically different from the model of democracy known in Western Europe and the United States, in that "all important organizations that mediate between the state and individuals were, in reality, extensions of the state rather than genuinely autonomous organizations."

[54] Campello de Souza (fn. 35, pp. 32-33) is the first scholar who has explicitly attributed the weakness and clientelism of the parties and the party system to the fact that they emerged after much power had been concentrated in the state. Since they did not participate in the decision-making process, their function was to purchase support and quiescence through the dispensation of patronage.

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zilian democracy, not only because it kept civil society weak in relation to the state, but also because the opposition was almost completely excluded from power during most of the democratic period. Democracy from above had given that elite a huge advantage over its major opponent to the right, the UDN. Between the first election in 1945 and Quadros's ascension in 1960, the UDN was consistently defeated in presidential elections, and the gulf between its members and those of the Vargas camp kept widening.[55] When the UDN realized that it could not win against the Vargas camp in the electoral arena, it began to resort to nondemocratic forms of action. Typically, it accused the victorious Vargas coalition of fraud, corruption, or of veering to the left, and did not hesitate to ask the military either to depose incumbent presidents or to prevent them from assuming office. Even after deposing Vargas in 1945, the party still complained bitterly about the unfair advantages that Dutra, the "official" candidate, was given by the Vargas elite. Shocked by Vargas's return in 1950, the UDN again joined the military in deposing him in 1954. When Kubitscheck won the election of 1955, the defeated UDN tried but failed to prevent him from taking office. Only when the charismatic Jânio Quadros ran and won under the UDN label did the UDN relent—but not for long. Its first and last major electoral victory proved to be a pyrrhic one. Quadros was too independent to be controlled by any party, and his charisma did not prevent Goulart, the UDN's most hated enemy after Vargas, from winning the Vice-Presidency. Thus, when Quadros resigned in 1961, the UDN once more resorted to the nondemocratic tactics of opposition that eventually led to autocracy.[56]

The potential for polarization was heightened in the fifties, under Vargas's democratic government, when the left was more actively drawn into the bitter conflict between the Vargas camp and the UDN. As we have seen, the strategy of the left was to infiltrate the corporative labor structure and to use it for its radical purposes. Profiting from the bitter conflicts between the two factions of the elite, the left exchanged votes and support for power positions within the corporative structure.[57] Before the

[55] For a detailed history of the relations between the UDN, the military, and the Vargas camp, see Maria Victoria de Mesquita Benevides, *A UDN e o Udenismo* [The UDN and Udenism] (Rio: Paz e Terra, 1981).

[56] Between 1945 and 1964, the UDN (or factions within it) urged the military to intervene on at least six different occasions. In view of the awful performance of what Stepan calls the "moderating pattern," it is not surprising that the military finally stayed in power in 1964. That this fact may have been instrumental in the breakdown of this pattern (rather than the ideological changes Stepan mentions as the causes of the breakdown), is suggested by John Markoff and Silvio R.D. Baretta, "Professional Ideology and Military Activism in Brazil," *Comparative Politics* 17 (No. 2, 1985), 175-91, in a recent critique of Stepan (fn. 20).

[57] For the strategy of the left, see Erickson (fn. 30), Parts II and III. On the Communist Party, see Ronald H. Chilcote, *The Brazilian Communist Party* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974).

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fifties, however, the opportunities to do so had been rather scarce. Although Vargas had always courted the working-class vote, he had done so mostly through the old populist politicians of the PTB and the co-opted leaders of his corporative structure rather than through the left. He had cautiously avoided the left because he did not want to alienate the moderate middle- and upper-class groups within his coalition. In 1953, however, Vargas embarked on a new political strategy that required the more aggressive support from labor that could be mobilized by the left. He therefore appointed Goulart to be his Labor Minister. Goulart, who was known for his collaboration with the left, allowed it to gain more power and actively to mobilize the working class. The UDN responded in a way that foreshadowed its response to Goulart later, in the years that preceded the coup.[58] As the situation polarized, the UDN and the military forced Goulart to resign. (The following year, they did the same to Vargas, which ultimately led him to commit suicide.)

The UDN, which had been asserting all along that the Vargas camp was corrupt, demagogic, and incompetent, now added the accusation that it fostered communism in Brazil. Whenever it could, the UDN launched an anticommunist crusade against the Vargas coalition. When Kubitscheck and Goulart were elected, members of the UDN maintained that they had been elected by the communists, and therefore had no right to take office.[59] A few years later it was to accuse its own victorious candidate of flirting with communism. Disturbed by Quadros's drift away from UDN control and his adoption of a somewhat anti-American foreign policy, the usual right-wing coalition of military officers and UDN politicians once again launched an attack against an incumbent President. In a clumsy attempt to gain even wider powers, Quadros resigned, triggering the severe political crisis that led to the coup. Ultimately, in order to block Goulart's accession to the presidency in 1961, and to depose him in 1964, the UDN once more accused its opponents of fostering communism.

For its part, the radical left used the right's attack on the populist politicians of the Vargas camp to strengthen its power over the working class. By 1964, the radicalization of both the extreme left and right had probably already gone too far for the military to step down after the coup. Although the more moderate military officers, led by Castelo Branco, wanted to return power to the civilians as quickly as they could, they had to defer to the "hard-line" military who believed they should stay on until major politico-economic changes had been effected. As Cardoso has

[58] Skidmore (fn. 17), 112-42.

[59] *Ibid.*, 149-50.

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pointed out, the hard-liners among the military won, largely because both political extremes engaged in even more radical forms of action.[60] As the left took to the streets, and the extreme left increasingly engaged in armed opposition, the extreme right retaliated in an ever more violent way, and the hard-line officers were able to impose their views on the rest of the military. The extremes thus gave the hard-line officers their justification for establishing an autocratic regime that was to last for two very long decades.

By the time of Vargas's suicide, the potential radicalization of Brazilian politics by the extremes was already evident. As the radical left increased its power, it became more and more difficult to maintain a middle course between the extremes. With Quadros's resignation, and Goulart's rise to the presidency, it became nearly impossible. After the military coup, nothing short of a miracle could have allowed a relatively quick return to democratic rule. By then, the dynamics of democracy from above had loaded the dice too heavily against the Brazilian democracy of 1946.

Conclusion

I have described the dynamics that make the success of democratic regimes difficult where a powerful state presides over both the process of capitalist industrialization and the inauguration of democracy. In such cases, where democracy is born from above, there is a tendency toward a polarization of the new regime that can ultimately lead to dictatorship.

The Brazilian case shows how the dynamics of democracy from above can lead to autocracy. The success of the political elite of the old regime in perpetuating both its own power and that of the state ultimately led to the radicalization of Brazilian politics by virtually excluding the opposition from power. Since the power of the old elite was based on the broad class coalition underlying the electoral alliance between the PSD and the PTB, the excluded opposition groups retaliated by undermining it in any way they could. The right exaggerated the threat from the left in order to frighten the middle- and upper-class out of Vargas's coalition, while the left used the attack from the right to increase its power over the work-

[60] On the division within the military, see Skidmore (fn. 17), 303-21. As for the dynamics that led to the victory of the hard-liners, see Fernando H. Cardoso, *O Modelo Político Brasileiro* [The Brazilian Political Model] (São Paulo: Difel, 1979), 77-78. Of course, the further radicalization of the extremes was not the only factor that prevented a return to civilian rule. By 1964, military officers felt they were prepared to rule and had developed a new ideology that could justify their rule. See Stepan (fn. 20), chap. 8. Recently, however, Markoff and Bareta (fn. 56) have criticized Stepan and suggested, among other things, that it was the poor functioning of the "moderating pattern" rather than the ideological changes mentioned by Stepan that led the military to remain in power.

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ing class in order to push its radical program of change. Together, they succeeded in eroding Vargas's coalition. In doing so, however, they also radicalized Brazilian politics, thus preventing the formation of an alternative moderate coalition that could have saved the democratic regime.

Caught between extremes, the growing urban lower classes were drawn into a struggle that was not really theirs. Having no political organizations of their own, they had to express and to defend their interests either through co-opted labor leaders and opportunistic populist politicians or through the left, which was benefiting from the polarization it was creating in conjunction with the extreme right. When autonomous working class organizations were formed, they were formed under the auspices of the left. And the left used them in the battle of extremes that ultimately destroyed, in one stroke and for a long time to come, both democracy and the prospects of an autonomous labor movement.

If there is a general lesson to be learned from the Brazilian case, it is that democracies born from above shape the potential conflicts of capitalist industrialization in a way that militates against their transformation into pluralist democracies—that is, into democracies in which power is considerably more diffused. Instead, democracies from above favor the emergence of modern forms of autocracy. Democracy from above is yet another disguise worn by autocracy to slip unnoticed into the modern world.

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THE PARTY, THE MILITARY, AND DECISION AUTHORITY IN THE SOVIET UNION

By CONDOLEEZZA RICE*

THE relationship between civilian authority and military expertise in the formulation of Soviet defense policy presents a vexing research problem. Not only are the data sparse, but what we do know about the role of the Soviet military is, on the surface, contradictory. Historical and ideological suspicion of standing professional armies and powerful officers runs deep in the Soviet Union. But, in creating a defense policy apparatus, the Communist Party has centralized the key military functions in both peacetime and wartime in the General Staff. To date, it has failed to create a comparable institutional base for civilian expertise in military affairs. Although the party leadership is the final authority in matters of defense, the absence of a coherent civilian staff institution that is competent to develop military strategy and force posture leaves political authorities heavily dependent on the professional military for information, expertise, and ultimately, policy options.[1]

This situation is not caused by neglect on the part of the Communist Party. On the contrary, the party leadership has paid considerable attention to the evolution and development of the military planning system. When we investigate the characteristics of this system more closely, it becomes clear that both party authority and military expertise are accommodated.

The Soviet military decision-making system operates as what organization theorists call a "loosely coupled" system:[2] one in which the leadership concentrates on setting the broad outlines of policy while option formation and implementation are left to the professional core. The crit-

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[1] Stephen Meyer makes this argument and links it to technology in "Civilian and Military Influence in Managing the Arms Race in the U.S.S.R.," in Robert J. Art, Vincent Davis, and Samuel P. Huntington, eds., *Reorganizing America's Defense: Leadership in War and Peace* (Washington, DC: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1985), 37-61.

[2] W. Richard Scott, *Organizations: Rational, Natural and Open Systems* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1981), 256-57.

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ical issue, then, is how linkage is maintained between political directives, the formation of options, and the implementation of decisions.

In this paper we will first examine the historical process by which the professional military in general, and the General Staff in particular, developed expertise and organizational capabilities to support the role they currently play in defense decision making. The General Staff acquired its functions through a slow, evolutionary, and above all political process in which it developed the competence to handle the critical functions of military management. In doing so, it arrived at a key historical juncture—the fall of Nikita Khrushchev—with a solid claim to competence and expertise in the military-technical sphere. The General Staff was able to eliminate competitors largely because parallelism and overlapping authority could not be tolerated. The Soviet Union has had to acquire military power fast and in a race with technologically and economically superior states; the result is a streamlined system for military planning. Second, we will explore the way loose coupling functions in the area of military policy that is dominated by the General Staff: issues of strategy, organization, and force posture. Third, we will look beyond this narrow sphere to other areas of military policy in which the General Staff's role is not as secure. Finally, we will examine some of the tensions inherent in a loosely coupled system and speculate briefly on its future under General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev.

The Origins of Loose Coupling

The early Bolsheviks intended to disband their army altogether once danger to the regime—first from Germany, and then from the White forces in the civil war—had disappeared. They never achieved this; after a period in which there was a mixed system, with some militia forces and some regular army detachments, the Red Army developed in accordance with the prevailing trends for European armies of the day.[3]

As the regular army developed, so did the competence of Soviet military theoreticians. The creation of the Red Army Main Staff in 1918 and its subsequent reorganization under the Frunze reforms of 1924-1925 was a watershed. First under Frunze and then under Mikhail Tukhachevsky, the staff consisted of brilliant young officers, many of whom had served on the imperial staff (as had Tukhachevsky). Officers like

[3] The best English-language source on this period is John Erickson's classic, *The Soviet High Command* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1962). Soviet sources include S. A. Tyushkevich et al., *Sovetskiye vooruzhenniye sily* [The Soviet armed forces] (Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo, 1978), and I. A. Korotkov, *Istoriya sovetskoi voennoi mysli: korotkii ocherk* [History of Soviet military thought: a short outline] (Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo, 1980).

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V. Triandifilov, A. A. Svechin, G. Isserson, and Tukhachevsky himself debated the impact of the mechanization of forces openly and sometimes heatedly. Soviet military theoreticians viewed themselves as a part of the international community of military specialists. They read and translated the works of Guderian in Germany, and Fuller and Liddell Hart in Britain. They sought a military strategy that best suited the Soviet Union's geographic position, political circumstances, and requirements. The strategy of "combined-arms operations in depth," which they developed, soon became the centerpiece of Soviet military thought.

What is striking about this period is the freedom of debate by military professionals.[4] Stalin's lieutenant, Kliment Voroshilov, was considered militarily illiterate by these officers; although he attempted to participate in the debate, he was often ignored. Eventually, in conjunction with military officers who opposed Tukhachevsky's line of thought, Voroshilov was able to make his views known. But Tukhachevsky appealed directly to Stalin on the issue of the mechanization of forces and won, albeit briefly, on the strength of his military arguments.[5]

As an institution, the military also triumphed over potential competitors for the right to conduct military science (essentially, the right to debate matters of military strategy). From the very beginning, the Soviet leadership employed political commissars and secret police moles within the army to make certain that officers were politically loyal; but the commissars did not gain influence over matters of military strategy. With the breakup of "dual command" in warfare (where a commander could not make a decision or issue an order without the concurrence of the political officer), the political administration lost its role as an equal in matters of military strategy. The Main Political Administration (MPA), which was both a department of the Central Committee and a directorate within the People's Commissariat for Defense, concentrated primarily on matters of administration and personnel.[6]

In its attempts to expand its role in the economics of defense, the professional military did not fare well in this period. Early treatises on staff organization by Tukhachevsky and by Boris Shaposhnikov (who was to become Chief of the General Staff) envisioned a unified military-

[4] Condoleezza Rice, "The Making of Soviet Strategy," in Peter Paret, ed., *The Makers of Modern Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), at 666-67.

[5] Lev Nikulin, *Tukhachevskii: biograficheskii ocherk* [Tukhackevsky: a biographical outline] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1964). Also see an account in Budu Svanidze, *My Uncle Joseph Stalin* (New York: G. P. Putnam Sons, 1953).

[6] Timothy Colton's *Commissars, Commanders and Civilian Authority: The Structure of Soviet Military Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979) is the definitive work on Soviet military politics and the development of the MPA.

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political organ that would have wide-ranging powers.[7] In Tukhachevsky's model, the General Staff would have played an extensive role in economic policy through the integration of industrial and war plans. Reversing priorities, Tukhachevsky developed a thesis on how the economy and diplomacy could serve military objectives. Although Tukhachevsky enjoyed great authority as Chief for Armaments during the massive industrialization and militarization drive of the early 1930s, the military's role in this area was never secure. Defense-related industrial concerns were kept under the watchful eye of a Central Committee department and, more importantly, of a trusted lieutenant—who in Tukhachevsky's time was Voroshilov. Stalin rejected the more grandiose plans for the role of the General Staff in planning the development of the economy.

In retrospect, it is surprising that the party, especially under the Stalinist expansion of the 1930s, did not create a Central Committee apparatus to parallel even those limited functions of the General Staff. Such departments were created for other governmental functions—for example, education and foreign affairs. In 1924, the Soviets considered creating a Secretariat for the Council of Labor and Defense as a working apparatus for questions of defense.[8] The plan was rejected, however, precisely because it might have infringed upon the responsibilities of the General Staff and caused "disconnections" in the strategic plan. With no institutional competitors, matters of military science were now the preserve of the professional military. The reforms of 1935, renaming the Red Army Staff the General Staff and expanding its function, further strengthened the role of central staff organs in military policy. The Soviets now had a General Staff in the great German and Russian imperial traditions to which they often looked; but the development of this staff system had not been automatic or inevitable. It soon became evident that the political position of the General Staff was still very fragile.

In 1937, in the face of developments in Germany and Japan, Stalin undertook a ruthless purge of the high command. Among the casualties were some of the Soviets' best military theoreticians such as Tukhachevsky. Loose coupling between political authority and military science was also eliminated. As a theory associated with "the enemy of the people" (Tukhachevsky), "deep operations" could not even be taught in the General Staff Academy.[9] Those who were associated with Voroshilov

[7] M. V. Tukhachevsky, *Voina kak problema vooruzhennoi bor'by* [War as a problem of armed struggle] (Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo, 1930).

[8] M. A. Gareyev, *Frunze: Voennii teoretik* [Frunze: military theoretician] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1985), 180-81.

[9] See Pyotr Grigorenko, *Grigorenko* (Memoirs) (New York: Holt, Reinhart & Winston, 1982).

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and theories opposed to Tukhachevsky's gained ascendance. The disarray caused by the politicization of strategy was evident at the outset of World War II and contributed heavily to the near-victory of Germany in the first months.

Stalin's and Voroshilov's interference and the understandable timidity of the recently purged high command also fostered confusion. The General Staff was constantly challenged by various political institutions for control of several critical functions. Matters of mobilization that were closely linked with organizational issues had only recently been centralized in the creation of a mobilization directorate for the General Staff. According to a number of accounts, however, several other organizations infringed upon the General Staff's role in this sphere. During this period, organizations were regularly created and disbanded, and replaced by new organizations. In 1941, for instance, the People's Commissariat for Defense created *Glavupraform* (Main Administration for Forming and Bringing Up to Strength the Forces of the Red Army), which siphoned off much of the General Staff's authority in matters of mobilization and the use of reserves. In June 1942, Stalin personally was forced to issue a directive delineating the functions of the General Staff and *Glavupraform*, but this measure only created more confusion. Eventually, mobilization and organizational matters were returned to the General Staff on a permanent basis.[10]

Similar challenges occurred in the area of intelligence. The purges had left the General Staff's Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) depleted and nervous. The NKVD began to take on many of the functions of the military intelligence organ and proceeded to sew distrust of the GRU in Stalin's mind. This was one reason for his virtual disregard of GRU reports on the imminent German attack in June 1941; only after several months of warfare was the position of the GRU reestablished in matters of military intelligence.

Even at this darkest moment for the General Staff, Stalin did not create an institution parallel to it that was capable of managing the entire range of military-technical functions. Rather, he exercised his personal power through the demoralized General Staff. Calling its members in to report to him, berating them and personally altering their plans, Stalin asserted his authority over the military. Later, facing the possible loss of the war, he relied increasingly on the expertise of his staff officers; it was the General Staff to whom Stalin delegated the task of option generation. There was, however, no doubt that *everything* was the preserve of the

[10] S. M. Shtemenko, *General'nyi stab v gody voini*, 2 vols. [The General Staff in the years of the war] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1973) chap. 2, p. 4.

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General Secretary. Structurally, loose coupling survived, but the reality was very different.

After the war, in spite of the near-disasters that had befallen the Soviet Union, Stalin again personally determined which questions the military should discuss. He would not allow, for instance, debate on the impact of the nuclear revolution on warfare (though he did order the rapid development of the A-bomb). Less than a year after his death, the professional military broke out of the Stalinist straitjacket. The first conference on the impact of nuclear weapons was held in 1954.

Just when the military was regaining its bearings in matters of military science, however, Nikita Khrushchev began to meddle in matters of military strategy. Khrushchev fancied himself as something of a military genius, or rather, he insisted that nuclear weapons made military genius unnecessary. Siding with radicals in the military—like the theoretician General A. I. Gastilovich who believed that any war would automatically become a strategic nuclear war—Khrushchev pushed Soviet military doctrine toward the extreme of "one-variant" war. Missiles were declared to be the decisive element of military power, and Khrushchev recommended massive cuts in the size of the armed forces and abolished the ground forces command, which he considered an anachronism in the nuclear age.

Khrushchev also attempted to use the Main Political Administration as an institutional base of support for his position, but found that the positions of the MPA officials were as diverse as those of the General Staff. To an extent, Khrushchev and his supporters were ignored. Even his handpicked Minister of Defense, Marshal Malinovsky, refused to support "one-variant" war fully: he defended the need to prepare for other contingencies and argued that the Soviet military needed to prepare for other types of war.[11] Within a few years, after the folly of Khrushchev's nuclear diplomacy had been exposed in Cuba, the military was able to debate nuclear strategy more openly.

Once Khrushchev was removed, the military lobbied actively for control of the military-technical sphere and for insulation from haphazard political interference. The General Staff, under the leadership of Marshal M. V. Zakharov (who had been dismissed by Khrushchev, but regained his position a few months after Khrushchev's fall) argued forcefully for "scientific approaches" to military planning and against "subjectivism and voluntarism," code words of Stalin's and Khrushchev's interven-

[11] Malinovsky stated, "Although nuclear weapons will hold the decisive place in future war . . . we are devoting due attention to the perfection of weapons of all types," *Izvestiya*, October 25, 1961. (Unless otherwise noted, all translations are by the present author.)

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tions. The military was not questioning the right of the party to direct military policy.[12] It simply wanted to make the point that "the more the political leadership relies on the conclusions prepared by military science, the more effective and effectual will be the decisions that are taken."[13]

Professionalization and the Ascendance of the General Staff

Under Leonid Brezhnev, the entire system of military management was overhauled. The General Staff, which grew in technological sophistication, was the primary beneficiary of the trend toward "scientific management." Its members insisted that military thought, military management, and ultimately the conduct of warfare needed to be integrated and brought firmly under its jurisdiction.

In Clausewitzian fashion, the Soviet military pressed the case for the systematic study of warfare. The General Staff rejected the notion of war as a series of random and mysterious events, arguing that there were laws that could be discovered through research and debate. In support of this position, they invoked the Marxist assertion that all of history developed scientifically. Scientific socialism, they argued, demanded that all phenomena, including warfare, be studied systematically. The drive to uncover the laws of warfare and to make decisions in a scientific fashion led to new methods of planning. Operations research, systems analysis, decision theory, and other methods taken from the hard sciences were instituted in all planning and operations agencies. As a result, major changes were made in both the curriculum of military academies and in the creation of new military specialties.

The growth of technical sciences and military economics as specialities had actually begun in the early 1960s. Interest increased in the use of new methods of planning in other countries—especially in those that were beginning to develop in McNamara's Pentagon. By the mid-1960s, the military had an entire cohort of officers who were trained in scientific methods of planning and analysis. There was to be a scientific basis both for decision making in peacetime planning and for the commander on the battlefield.[14] The decisions of the 23rd Party Congress (1966) have often

[12] M. V. Zakharov, *Krasnaya zvezda*, February 4, 1965.

[13] K. Ivanov, "Nauchniye printsipy rukovodstva zashchiniye socialist-icheskogo otechestva," [The scientific principles of leading the defense of the fatherland], *Kommunist vooruzhenykh sil'* (No. 16, 1969), 12; cited in David Holloway's excellent analysis of Soviet military management, *Technology and Military Management in the Soviet Union*, Adelphi Paper No. 76 (London: International Institute of Strategic Studies, 1977).

[14] See John Erickson's "Soviet Cybermen: Men and Machines in the Soviet System," *Signal* (December 1984). The classic Soviet work on this subject is V. V. Druzhinin and I. A. Korontov, *Ideiya, algorithm i resheniya* [Idea, algorithm and decision] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1972).

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been cited as the rationale for improvements in the planning system of the entire state. In fact, advocacy of scientific planning by key military officers pre-dated by at least two to three years the emphasis on improved planning that appeared in the party documents.

The General Staff Academy, long the military's primary think tank, improved its ability to conduct games and simulations in order to "scientifically substantiate" the efficacy of various options for strategy and for the solution of "military theoretical problems."[15] Senior officers with technical backgrounds were promoted rapidly and appointed to boards and advisory positions, thus ensuring the integration of the technical disciplines into mainstream military thought. For instance, General I. I. Anureyev, a specialist in operations research, was moved onto the Council of the Academy of the General Staff. General V. V. Druzhinin, a specialist in decision theory, became a member of the editorial board of the limited-distribution journal *Military Thought* in order to encourage the publication of scientific articles in that key journal.

At the same time, numerous officers who were not as technically sophisticated were released from service. This caused considerable resentment and set off a debate about the role of the "commander-engineer" in the leadership of the armed forces. Some argued that qualities like courage and moral leadership should not be underestimated in the urgency to search for computer knowledge.[16] But the trend did not abate. Colonel General Nikolai Ogarkov was appointed Deputy Chief of the General Staff in 1968, apparently to improve the management of the military-technological side of defense planning. In 1977 Ogarkov, an engineer, was promoted to marshal and appointed Chief of the General Staff.

While emphasizing modern methods, the General Staff did not lose sight of traditional modes of analysis. As a counterpoint to quantitative analysis, it rejuvenated the role of the study of military history. Long, dry volumes on the history of "the Great Patriotic War" were finally completed in the late 1960s. In the early 1970s, the General Staff became interested in the study of military history as a basis for understanding contemporary warfare. In 1970, the Ministry of Defense had requested the General Staff to study a number of lessons of World War II, including those of the beginning period of the war and the problems of command and control that it exposed. The General Staff Academy, which in 1953

[15] Viktor Kulikov, *Akademiya general'nogo staba* [Academy of the General Staff] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1976), 208.

[16] The need for caution is sounded in V. Bondarenko and S. Tyushkevich, "Soveremennyi etap revolutsii v voennom dele i trebovaniya k voennym kadram" [The contemporary stage of the revolution in military affairs and the demands for military cadres], *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil'* (No. 6, 1968).

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had abolished its faculty of military history, reestablished it in 1973. With the decision to bring military historians back to the most important military academy in the Soviet Union, the General Staff reasserted its interest in shaping the collective memory of the Soviet Armed Forces.[17]

While securing its role in the formulation of military thought, the General Staff simultaneously pressed for more purposeful integration of new functions into its domain and for greater authority over the services in matters of organization. The Soviet General Staff is not only a planning staff, but a command staff as well. Since the reforms of 1935, it has had directorates for mobilization, intelligence, and communications, as well as for military science and operations. Currently, it also has directorates for topography, external relations, foreign military assistance, as well as free-standing departments for military history, legal and treaty matters, and a political department.

As we have seen, many of these changes were brought about in response to the demands of new technologies, particularly in communications and intelligence, and to the growing importance of military satellites and electronic means as key intelligence assets. The General Staff's role in coordinating the huge and redundant layered warning system of the Soviet Union grew as the information became directly available to the central command. A similar centralizing trend has taken place in communications. The chief of the signal troops, General A. I. Belov, has served simultaneously as chief of the General Staff's communications directorate since the late 1970s.

Mirroring this centralization of functions, major efforts to integrate planning and to create a "single strategic view" were, and still are, aggressively pursued. The primacy of combined-arms doctrine provides the rationale for the General Staff's dominance of strategy. The main staffs of the services are responsible for developing the operational art and tactics that are service-specific. The General Staff reviews changes in the operational art of the services to make certain that it is consistent with the overall thrust of national military strategy.

The General Staff has tried to prevent diversions from national strategy by improving its input in the service staff's planning processes and by a unified training program even for senior officers. As early as 1960, an already strong all-service perspective was strengthened with the abolition of separate service faculties at the Voroshilov Academy. Instead, all senior officers were put through a unified arms course.[18] There have also been extensive efforts to standardize methods of planning. Planning indices

[17] Kulikov (fn. 15), 204.

[18] *Ibid.*, 144.

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have long required the General Staff's approval. In the 1960s, this requirement was extended to the development of textbooks on planning methods for use in all agencies, staffs, academic institutions, and military-scientific societies. This effort to integrate planning is reflected in the designated role of the General Staff. Until 1982, it was said to *coordinate* the work of the service staffs, but it is now said to *direct* that work.[19]

Progress has even been made in integrating what has always been a somewhat unruly navy. The Soviet Navy has twice had its own ministry, and has at times made clear that the army-dominated General Staff knows little about sea power. It is true that, like most army-dominated staffs, the General Staff has tended to view naval power as an appendage of ground power, best used in a support role. This position has grown unpalatable for an increasingly sophisticated navy; there have been several altercations between the admirals and the General Staff. The publication of V. D. Sokolovskii's *Military Strategy* in 1963 touched off one such dispute, to which the leadership responded by creating the post of Special Assistant to the Chief of the General Staff for Naval Affairs. Since at least 1972, a post of Deputy Chief of the General Staff has been reserved for an admiral. This did not prevent a round of disagreement between the General Staff and the former Chief of the Navy, Admiral S. F. Gorshkov, on the role of naval power in modern warfare. Generally, though, the navy has had to compromise and find a way to justify its views in terms consistent with General Staff strategy.[20]

This evolution has given the Soviets a sophisticated and modern military, capable of the entire range of intellectual, planning, and management functions, and perhaps more insulated from the kind of personalistic intrusions that were characteristic of the rule of Stalin and Khrushchev. Advances in technology have helped to rationalize and justify the integration of functions. But the changes in the staff's role are still well within the bounds of the military-technical sphere and subject to political authority when the Party chooses to exercise it.

Loose Coupling, Option Formation, and Decision Authority

How does this loosely coupled system work? In order to accommodate political concerns for control and military demands for efficiency simultaneously, the party and the military must link up effectively in the de-

[19] "General'nyi stab" [General Staff], *Sovetskoi voennoi entsikolopedii* [Soviet military encyclopedia] (Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo, 1982).

[20] See James McConnell, "The Gorshkov Articles, the New Gorshkov Book, and their Relation to Policy," in Michael McGwire and James McConnell, eds., *Soviet Naval Influence* (New York: Praeger, 1977), 565-617.

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cision process. If they do not, institutional loose coupling can lead to no coupling at all.

An analysis of decision making must begin by distinguishing between type and level of decision. In modern statecraft, political leaders are unconcerned with routine, day-to-day management of the military. The military decisions that attract their attention are the major ones: large-scale organizational changes (such as the creation of commands), questions of military doctrine (first use of nuclear weapons, for example) and the decision to buy major weapons systems. Even important decisions must rest upon analysis and development of options at subordinate levels, since busy political leaders lack the time and expertise to perform these functions themselves. In the strictest sense, therefore, any military decision-making system is loosely coupled.

What distinguishes the Soviet system is the apparent absence of civilian expertise at the staff level where option formation takes place. Institutional loose coupling in the Soviet Union amounts to a split along civilian and military lines. The U.S.S.R. is not unique in this regard. Highly centralized military systems, employing general staffs, do not as a rule have a parallel civilian/political apparatus for analysis and option formation. There is no reason to expect that the Soviets would, as the American system does, equate the maintenance of political authority with a civilian/political apparatus for analysis and option formation. It is the American system that is unique in that a civilian chain (the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the civilian secretaries of the services) functions parallel to those of the professional military staffs.

But within the context of Soviet policy the failure to create a parallel civilian apparatus is peculiar. The absence of a civilian staff institution for military policy cannot be attributed to the character of decision making in a totalitarian system. In fact, totalitarian systems are characterized by precisely the opposite trend: the politicization of every sphere of life. In other policy areas in the Soviet Union, there is both a professional core of government experts and a parallel party organization with its own cadre of experts. In the foreign policy sphere, for instance, there is the Foreign Ministry on the government side and an International Department of the Central Committee with an expert foreign policy staff on the party side.

On closer examination, however, the absence of civilian experts is not nearly so surprising or impressive. If defense policy is thought of as a series of concentric circles, the Soviet military dominates the innermost circle: strategy, force posture, and matters of organization.[21] The military's

[21] Timothy Colton has developed a useful scheme for understanding the role of the Soviet military; see Colton (fn. 6), 234. See also the work of William E. Odom, including his com-

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monopoly on expertise, information, and option generation does not extend beyond this narrow area.

Dominance of strategy, organization, and force posture is not to be taken lightly. Military-technical issues have an important impact on peacetime resource allocation and the conduct of foreign policy. The absence of civilian expertise at the staff level for these important matters means that civilian authority is exercised either late in the process of deciding between policy options, or very early—through requests for analysis and recommendations. Oversight rests with officials (and perhaps with their personal staffs) who are so high up in the process that they are unlikely to pay attention to military issues on a daily basis.

Data on decision linkages in the Soviet Union are scarce, of course. Still, the concept of loose coupling is consistent both with the way the Soviets talk about decision making and with what we know of their institutional arrangements. The Soviets assert that the party, through the Central Committee (which is big and meets too infrequently to play this role in reality), the Politburo, and the Defense Council provide guidance and leadership, while the Ministry of Defense (and its subordinate organs) manage, administer, and implement decisions on the basis of broad directives.[22]

The Defense Council, a largely civilian body, is responsible for continuous oversight of Soviet defense policy and for major defense decisions.[23] Headed by the General Secretary and consisting of at least the Minister of Defense, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Chairman of the KGB, the Politburo member with responsibility for defense-industrial concerns, and the Chief of the General Staff (perhaps as a voting member), this body is in effect the highest authority on matters of defense in the Soviet Union.

The Defense Council apparently passes requests for options and for analyses to support decisions to the General Staff through the Minister of Defense. There are possibly a few individuals or even small groups competent to advise party leaders on certain aspects of military policy, but there is no evidence that a civilian apparatus for the kind of analysis and option formation carried out by the General Staff has ever existed in the

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mentary in Dale E. Herspring and Ivan Volgyes, *Civil-Military Relations in Communist Systems* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1977).

[22] A recent reference to this hierarchy can be found in the speech by Minister of Defense Marshal S. L. Sokolov to the 27th Party Congress. *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 2, 1986.

[23] For the most detailed description of the Defense Council, see the work of Ellen Jones, including the section on Soviet decision making, in Jones, *Red Army and Society* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1985). Also see Harriett Fast Scott and William F. Scott, *The Armed Forces of the USSR* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1979).

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Soviet Union.[24] All available evidence suggests that the staff work for the Defense Council is carried out by the General Staff which is, according to the Soviets, "the administrative organ of the military forces in peace and war."[25]

Once the General Staff is asked to investigate an issue, it apparently recommends a solution, but others are also presented. Considerations other than military efficiency are factored in, and a militarily optimal solution may be rejected for other reasons, including economic or political ones.[26] Moreover, there are differences of opinion even in the debate that leads to formation of options. For instance, when the Soviets had to decide how to integrate nuclear weapons into their forces, there were several different options.[27] The final decision—the creation of an integrated command called the Strategic Rocket Forces—was clearly the one preferred by General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev. The system may not have alternative institutions, but that does not necessarily mean that political leaders are without alternative solutions to the problems they face.

The Soviets thus draw a distinction between the role of the analyst and that of the decision maker. Decision makers, according to one source, should be presented with "the qualities that characterize the advantages and disadvantages of alternate variants. The making of the decision is the function of command or leadership."[28] The Chief of the General Staff (who participates in the deliberations of the Defense Council) and the Minister of Defense are both decision makers in their roles on the Council. They also provide the link between political authority and military direction and management. It is not surprising that political authorities have the final say in the selection of these key actors.

But the top-to-bottom picture of decisionmaking does not tell the whole story. The professional military does have the critical role of identifying new problems in the conduct of war. The "military scientists," as the Soviets call their analysts, do this through research and debate on an ongoing basis. One example of the military's role in determining the agenda from below is the recent reorganization of the Soviet armed

[24] The range and scope of General Staff activities is one indicator. Military staffs are said to resemble "large research institutes" with specialists from a variety of disciplines coming together to analyze problems. The General Staff also "contracts out" to the Voroshilov and Frunze Academies, and sometimes to specialists from the Academy of Sciences. Kulikov (fn. 15), 20.

[25] "General'nyi stab" [General Staff], *Voennyi entsiklopedicheskii slovar* [Military encyclopedic dictionary]; (Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo, 1983), 186.

[26] See, for example, Yu S. Solnyshkov, *Optimizatsiya vybora vooruzheniya* [Optimal selection of armaments] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1968).

[27] V. F. Tolubko, *Nedelin* (Moscow: Molodaya Gvardiay, 1979).

[28] Solnyshkov (fn. 26), 11.

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forces for war. The policy outcome was the creation of an intermediate level of command between Moscow and the front level of command in the field. The decision to create theaters of military operations as permanent commands in order to facilitate centralized leadership in warfare is not likely to have come about because the Defense Council, upon reflection, decided that the Soviet armed forces were missing a command link. Rather, we can identify the emergence of the concept of theaters of military operations as a command level in the military theoretical literature; support for the concept in the writings of Chiefs of the General Staff led to the creation of one such command and the subsequent creation of three others.

Soviet nuclear strategy in the late 1950s and early 1960s envisioned a very short war in which a decisive nuclear blow would be struck in the first hours. In the most extreme sectors of the military, this was thought to obviate the need for conventional strategy, since wars would now be won by "nuclear missile warfare." The debate culminated in the publication of a report by a commission headed by former Chief of the General Staff Marshal V. D. Sokolovskii.[29] The volume supported Khrushchev's view somewhat equivocally and opened up a storm of debate about the future character of warfare.

On the heels of Khrushchev's nuclear debacle in Cuba and of debate in NATO about the need for flexibility in military forces, Soviet military theoreticians became even more alarmed at the dominance of "one-variant war." The belief that warfare might be protracted or might even begin with a conventional phase began to gain ascendance. Admission of the possibility of a conventional phase led theoreticians to worry about command and control, and to turn to a purposeful study of the problems of strategic leadership in World War II.

The General Staff Academy, on orders of the General Staff, conducted a number of studies concerned with this question.[30] One of these was an analysis, in 1964, of strategic leadership of large-scale formations (groups of fronts) in theaters of military operations. Over the next few years, theoreticians began to talk about theaters of military operations, not as geographic designations, but as separate command levels. By 1968, there were seminars at the General Staff Academy on the problem of leadership of large-scale formations. The issue came to the attention and received the support of Marshal Viktor Kulikov, who was Chief of the General Staff at the time; he wrote the definitive article about the concept

[29] Sokolovskii et al., *Voennaya strategiya* [Military strategy] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1963).
[30] See Kulikov (fn. 15), 181.

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in 1975.[31] Referring to the creation of such a command for the Far Eastern campaign of World War II, Kulikov recommended an intermediate command level that would strengthen centralized leadership of front-level commands. Four years later, under a new Chief of the General Staff, Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, the first of such commands was set up in the Far East and entrusted to Army General Vasily Petrov. Ogarkov continued to press the case for these commands on a worldwide basis, and for their readiness in peacetime.[32] Eventually, three other commands were created, completing the reorganization.

Unfortunately, we do not know the process by which Kulikov and Ogarkov finally received approval for their theater-level commands. Because the new commands would have considerable impact on the political-military direction of a war effort and because they required resources, the Defense Council probably approved the request. The important point, however, is that this was an initiative from below. In a system which lacks civilian experts at the staff level, that may well be a frequent occurrence.

In short, the delegation of these functions to the professional military without a parallel party apparatus gives the military broad jurisdiction in the generation of options and in setting the agenda for defense decisions. There are at least two reasons why the Soviets have this structure. First, institutions have a way of solidifying their hold over matters that have historically been within their jurisdiction. This is especially true in circumstances where competitors—who might have developed expertise and competence over time—have been eliminated. In the few cases in which competitors did emerge in embryonic form, the results have not been good. The politicization of military strategy has led to a number of debacles; the most dramatic, of course, was the Soviet Union's near-defeat at the hands of Germany in 1941. It is probably not accidental that the General Staff constantly and not at all subtly reminds the leadership of that experience.

Second, there are the dangers of diffusion of authority and the spread of information that would accompany the creation of competitive institutions. Competitive options formation, flowing from parallel institutions, would require access to information for another set of actors. It is doubtful that even those who formulate the options within the General

[31] Kulikov, "Strategicheskiye rukovodstvo vooruzhennykh sila" [Strategic leadership of the armed forces], *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* (No. 6, 1975), 12-24.

[32] Ogarkov, *Vsegda v gotovnosti k zashchite otechestva* [Always prepared to defend the fatherland] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1982).

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Staff are privy to all relevant data. Rather, pieces of information are put together as decisions move up the pyramidal structure until they come together at the very top of the hierarchy. Those who make the decisions can hold sensitive information very tightly. Serial rather than parallel structures maximize information control. Since no information is more sensitive than the facts of Soviet military power, the absence of multiple, parallel institutions is not so surprising.

More importantly, the boundary around military-technical issues is not so impermeable as to isolate the party completely from matters of strategy. This is especially true when the party leadership, for whatever reason, has chosen to focus on an issue, as has been the case with Soviet nuclear strategy.

It is often argued that technology demands expertise and leads to tyranny of the experts. For a while, nuclear weapons did lead to such a tyranny of military experts in the Soviet Union. In the early days of the development of nuclear strategy, Soviet officers seemed to think of nuclear missiles as very high-yield artillery pieces. In time, however, the view that nuclear weapons were not just like any other weapon began to surface. Some sociologists and philosophers outside the military, who tried to understand the character of war and society in the nuclear age, believed that the Soviet military was too optimistic about the winnability of nuclear war.[33] The General Staff seems to have objected to these activities of nonmilitary specialists and was able to silence some of the debate.

Concern about the devastating power of nuclear weapons persisted, however. Physicists, in particular, provided considerable support for the belief that nuclear war would be unlike any other in human history. These views were not lost on the political leadership. After years of debate about the character of nuclear war and the role of military superiority, Brezhnev announced that parity, not military superiority, was the Soviet goal. A few years later, he pronounced nuclear war to be unwinnable.[34] Military comment hardly fell into lockstep immediately: the Soviet military was preparing to fight wars, not to prevent them. Eventually, however, the debate incorporated the Brezhnev theses, though Soviet military strategy and force posture are still structured to provide real military options, even in a nuclear war. There is a considerable difference, therefore, between political doctrine and military strategy. This is a familiar problem even in the United States, where declaratory doctrine and military strategy have not always been in step. But the problem

[33] Ilya Zemsov, *Soviet Sociology: A Study of Lost Illusion* (Fairfax, VA: Hero Books, 1984). I am indebted to Notra Trulock for pointing out this source to me.

[34] *Pravda*, October 21, 1981.

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is more acute in the Soviet Union. Without a set of civilian experts who know both the nature of nuclear weapons and the details of Soviet military strategy, the power of the political leadership to bridge that gap depends on its ability to change the views of the General Staff. Perhaps the considerable attention given to the possibility of fighting a conventional war without the employment of nuclear weapons is the Soviet military's answer to the question, "What becomes of military strategy if nuclear war cannot be won?"

Force-Posture Decisions and Resource Allocation

The issue of force structure has also been subjected to the search for "scientific solutions." The professional military, particularly the General Staff, is still the key body in formulating options for force structure. But, since this matter impinges upon broader economic issues, the apparatus for military-economic decisions is very complex. In view of the garrison-state mentality of the Soviet political leadership, one does not have to posit the military's dominance to explain the Soviet Union's large expenditures for defense. Presumably, the professional military is a powerful—even aggressive—voice in the defense consensus, but it does not control, as it does in matters of strategy, all of the assets, sources of information, and expertise on military budgetary matters.

Important party functionaries, presumably with staffs, oversee defense-industrial concerns. The key actor is the Party Secretary with responsibility for this area. L. N. Zaikov, who holds this position at present, is a member of the Politburo, as was his predecessor, R. G. Romanov. Both men gained their experience as heads of the Leningrad party organization, a center for the development of defense technology. If a change in priorities is indicated, this is the key position for the General Secretary to control.

Several institutions below the Politburo level provide wide-ranging expertise to the party and the government. A Central Committee Department for Defense Industries gives the party the kind of oversight in this area that it does not have in matters of doctrine and strategy. The Military Industrial Commission and, on occasion, joint *ad hoc* committees to settle disputed resource-allocation questions bring together professional military officers, officials of the Department of Defense Industries of the Ministry of Defense, scientists, and *Gosplan* economists. The State Committee for Science and Technology is also said to have a role in resource allocation in the research-and-development stage. Within the Ministry of Defense itself, there are parallel institutions concerned with armament: the

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defense industries group and the General and service staffs. The officers of the defense industries sector have usually had career paths separate from the core professional military.

There have been changes in the military's role in this sphere, but these changes have not necessarily enhanced its voice in determining its own share of resources. This is, of course, the area in which there is the greatest potential for civilian-military conflict. For about twelve years, from the ouster of Khrushchev until around 1976, the military had little reason to complain. Soviet defense spending data are always suspect, but most analysts would agree that the share of GNP devoted to defense was exceptionally high (12 to 18 percent). Sometime in the mid-1970s, the growth in the rate of procurement began to slow down.[35] Was this a conscious policy decision by the party leadership, the end of a procurement cycle, or was it tied to the general slowdown in the Soviet economy? One article offered a thinly veiled suggestion that strategic planning would be facilitated by more closely tying defense allocations to long-term (ten-year) plans.[36] The rate of GNP was mentioned as one possible determinant of the share devoted to military needs. If military spending had been tied to GNP, it would have been protected from sudden reductions due to political interference; but the proponents of this idea may not have foreseen economic recessions. It is not clear whether this proposal was ever taken seriously, but it is one conceivable explanation for the slowdown in procurement in the mid-1970s, corresponding to a slowdown in general economic growth. Unfortunately, difficulties in measuring Soviet defense spending make it impossible to establish this relationship definitively.

After 1969, there was a major push to incorporate measures of economic efficiency into armament selection. The military had gained a reputation as big spenders who took little care in selecting research projects for funding and in awarding contracts.[37] In response, the Soviet military developed a keen interest in the McNamara revolution in the Pentagon.[38] A subsequent controversy over how to price military goods turned on whether the military budget had to reflect resource scarcity. One military economist noted that

[35] The size of the slowdown is a matter of controversy, and the dollar costing method used is replete with methodological problems. David Holloway has provided a useful discussion of this problem in *The Soviet Union and the Arms Race* (New Haven: Yale, 1983), 114.

[36] V. D. Sokolovskii and M. Cherednichenko, in "Some Problems of Military Science," *Military Thought* (July 1968), 14, tried to suggest more systematic methods for determining the share of state expenditures to defense.

[37] Henry Firdman. *Decisionmaking in the Soviet Microelectronics Industry* (Falls Church, VA: Delphic Emigre Series, 1985).

[38] Solnyshkov (fn. 26), 18.

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> the comparability of value indices is not achieved by the monetary form alone. It is necessary to apply a uniform level of wholesale prices. . . . Only in that way is it possible to know society's real outlays on the country's defense and compare them with other economic indices of the economy's development.[39]

Perhaps in order to preempt the civilianization of this function, military economists—most of them working for the defense industries sector—incorporated efficiency measures and costing procedures in their own work. The promotion of Dmitri Ustinov, whose experience was in the defense-industrial sector, to Defense Minister in 1976 probably accelerated this trend.

The optimization measures were of two types: selecting between two models of the same weapon (a tank prototype, for instance) and deciding on the correct mix of weapons to perform a particular mission—for instance, "Which is it better to develop in order to keep military-industrial objectives of a probable enemy under threat: aircraft-bombers, intercontinental missiles, or missile submarines?"[40] The first type of decision could presumably be made primarily by the service staffs. It was the second type of decision that increased the General Staff's role in weapons acquisition and resource allocation. The scientific-technical committee of the General Staff provided better machinery for decisions based on mission requirements. It was headed, apparently in an effort to ensure complete cooperation, by N. N. Alekseyev, a former Deputy Chief of the General Staff who became Deputy Minister of Defense for Armaments.

When Alekseyev died in 1978, his replacement, Army General Shabanov, did not come from the General Staff, but from the electronics sector of the defense industries; there is no mention of the Scientific Technical Committee in his identification. The reasons for this are unknown. Perhaps the leadership, with defense-industrial specialist Dimitri Ustinov now Minister of Defense, decided to strengthen the hand of the defense-industrial sector. Or they may have viewed too close a connection between the General Staff and the armaments process as unwise. When the appropriate use of resources within the military was at issue, the General Staff seems to have played a major role in harmonizing service interests. With the onset of resource scarcity, however, it may have been necessary to turn to those with a background in the defense industries in order to promote efficiency. In this regard, 1976 and the appointment of Ustinov may have been a watershed.

[39] P. V. Sokolov, *Voenno-ekonomicheskiye voprosi v kurse politekonomii* [Military-economic questions in the course of political economy] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1968).

[40] Solnyshkov (fn. 26), 11.

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In matters of weapons selection and resource allocation, the picture is therefore more complicated than in the inner circle that is concerned with development of strategy. The role that the General Staff plays in optimizing by mission and harmonizing service interests may quite properly be a part of that inner circle. On the other hand, expertise for costing weapons systems and developing technical requirements exists within other institutions. Although there is a great deal of overlap between the functions, the party does not have to rely on the General Staff to tell it how much money to spend and what to buy with its enormous expenditure. This gives the party bodies responsible for oversight for this area a strong lever in guiding the direction of force posture.

Foreign Policy and Arms Control

In the areas of intelligence, arms control, and foreign policy, the General Staff's role is even weaker. A number of parallel institutions are available to help the party leadership decide how to use its military forces. The GRU, which is the Intelligence Directorate under the General Staff, is the kingpin for military intelligence, and the KGB can provide a second opinion when needed. Moreover, in matters of political intelligence, the KGB is all-pervasive, and even capable of providing a source for intelligence about the military itself.

In foreign policy and arms control, many institutions are expert and competent to offer advice and information. The arms control delegations of the Soviet Union show remarkable continuity, suggesting that they have become an important source of advice. There is an Arms Control and Disarmament section in the Foreign Ministry. The Academy of Sciences Institutes, especially the Institute for the U.S.A. and Canada, are important sources of information on American attitudes and, perhaps through KGB contacts, on American defense and scientific programs. Their experts are also increasingly competent on matters of the strategic interaction between the Soviet Union and the United States. But their role is rightfully outside of this circle, not in the circle concerned with Soviet military strategy. On this subject, they apparently lack sources of information and intelligence, and so cannot comment on what Soviet strategy and force posture ought to be.

An important technical community, composed of high-ranking physicists of the Academy of Sciences and of weapons designers, has traditionally played an influential part in Soviet nuclear policy. To develop an atomic bomb, Stalin turned primarily to I. A. Kurchotov and other Soviet

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scientists, virtually isolating the military from the project.[41] Brezhnev, who played a major role in early ICBM development, was in direct contact with design bureau chiefs at least as often as with the military. The nuclear physicist Ye. Velikhov was perhaps the closest advisor to Gorbachev at the Geneva summit in 1985 and again at Reykjavik in October 1986. The technical community is thus an important source of information and advice on the effects of nuclear weapons and the potential of new technologies.

In matters of arms control, nevertheless, the General Staff has great visibility. Since arms control affects force posture, it is not surprising that key officers like Ogarkov and Alekseyev have played important roles on Soviet arms control delegations. Neither is it surprising that there is a Legal and Treaty Department of the General Staff, headed by the very visible General Nikolai Chervov. Gorbachev took Chief of the General Staff Marshal Akhromeyev to the Reykjavik summit despite the fact that his American counterpart, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral William Crowe, was not present.

But the General Staff is only one source for arms control options, and its advice can be rejected. It is difficult to believe that the General Staff agrees with Gorbachev's recent arms control proposals which, at the very least, would eliminate intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Europe. The military was reportedly very unhappy about Gorbachev's insistence on a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing (recently revoked) when there was little prospect that the United States would reciprocate.

The Treaty on Security and Confidence-Building Measures in Europe, signed in Stockholm in 1987, carried cumbersome measures for the notification of exercises and intrusive verification means to allow inspection of troop formations deep in Soviet territory; it must have been quite unpalatable for the General Staff. This kind of arms control stands in marked contrast to the measured limitations on U.S. and Soviet forces characteristic of the Brezhnev era. Arms control that places limits on American technology and systems that threaten the Soviet Union are, arguably, acceptable to the Soviet military, even if Soviet systems are limited in the process. Because these agreements have focused on bilateral limitations on already extraordinarily high numbers of weapons, the military's ability to meet its targeting requirements has not been threatened.

But arms control appears to be entering another phase altogether un-

[41] See especially David Holloway's work on the early nuclear program, "Entering the Nuclear Arms Race: The Soviet Decision to Build the A-Bomb: 1939-45, *Social Studies of Science* 11 (Summer 1981).

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der Gorbachev. The measures agreed to at Stockholm begin to impinge upon the operational readiness of Soviet conventional forces through extensive verification and notification procedures. Recent suggestions that the Warsaw Pact is ready to entertain deep conventional force reductions and "discussions" on military doctrine cut right to the heart of the General Staff's traditional domain. The Soviets have even proclaimed that they have a new military doctrine and that they are ready to discuss the problems of surprise attack in Europe. It is far too early to take any of this at face value, but these measures could have significant implications for the very essence of Soviet military strategy, the rapid offensive. There may yet be a jurisdictional battle between the General Staff and other institutions with a stake in arms control policy over the boundaries of the "military-technical" side of doctrine.[42]

In this, as in other jurisdictional battles throughout Soviet history, the party will be the final arbiter. General Secretaries, in particular, have played a critical role in deciding how permeable the boundaries of the "military-technical" side of doctrine will be.

The fact that the Soviets have not equated civilian control and authority with civilian management (through a set of experts whose functions parallel those of the General Staff) may be a strength of the system. The party exercises effective control, not by delegating authority to the professional military, but by holding them responsible and accountable for the faithful execution of their duties. This principle was recently exercised in the "Cessna Affair," which Gorbachev used to fire an "incompetent" Chief of the Air Defense Forces and an "aging" Minister of Defense. Historically, the Chief of the General Staff has been the point man for responsibility. There have been ten changes in the position since World War II. The last two Chiefs of the General Staff have been dismissed.

The party has every reason to believe that the military services wish to give them their best estimates on how to win the next war. Moreover, *nomenklatura* (a party-approved list of potential candidates) provides the party with a strong hand in deciding who occupies important military posts. Control of personnel is the key to party dominance of military matters. The KGB is a counterweight to the military, and an effective mechanism to assuage residual fears of "Bonapartism" (military takeover). Most importantly, high-ranking officers are also high-ranking communists with an enormous stake in the system. Military men are incorporated into the Central Committee in peacetime and STAVKA (Supreme

[42] Defense Minister D. T. Yazov discusses the Warsaw Pact's appeal for these discussions in *Pravda*, June 27, 1987. He forcefully asserts, however, that Pact doctrine is already defensive.

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High Command) in wartime to assure unity of military and political goals. The complex network in which important military men are simultaneously senior party officials complicates the application of the concepts "civilian" and "military" in an analysis of defense decision making. Some of the benefits of parallelism and civilian management—in particular, constant contact with the professional military—are available to the leadership even without a civilian apparatus to plan for defense.

One potential problem with loose coupling is the delicate process of keeping military and political goals in balance. Does a system in which strategy is left to the professional military put civilians at a disadvantage in time of war? Some would argue that military dominance of strategy can lead to militarily brilliant strategies that are politically stupid.[43]

Soviet political doctrine, which posits resort to war only "if the imperialists unleash it," is defensive in tone; but Soviet military strategy is unselfconsciously offensive, even preemptive, in character. New wrinkles, such as the conventional-warfare option, place a premium on speed and decisiveness; they would seem to exert great pressure on civilian leaders to use their forces early and massively. In view of the institutional structure discussed above, the Soviet Union would appear to be an ideal candidate to initiate the type of nightmare associated with World War I and the prerogatives of the German General Staff.

The outside observer is confronted by an uncomfortable gap in Soviet doctrine between an offensive military strategy and a defensive political doctrine. The Soviets have been unwilling to remove the ambiguity and, in the absence of actual experience, it is difficult to know whether it is real or imagined. But surface similarities between the German and Soviet cases can easily be overdrawn. First, it is important to ask whether military strategies alone can lead to war.[44] At every step, both political and diplomatic measures can be taken. The Soviets fashioned in 1941, and continue to refine, a system for the conduct of war that rests heavily on combined military and political expertise. The leadership will have to read political and military intelligence and also try to guess the intentions of the adversary. Those are problems with which any leadership, whatever its military strategy, is faced.

If the Soviet Union decided to initiate a war, there would be great pressure from the military to allow a massive and rapid advance. The Soviet

[43] Ned Lebow. "The Soviet Offensive in Europe: The Schlieffen Plan Revisited?" *International Security* (Spring-Summer 1985), 44-78.

[44] There is an excellent discussion of the role of other factors in Jack S. Levy's "Organizational Routines and the Causes of War," *International Studies Quarterly* (No. 30, 1986), 193-222.

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military, and presumably the Soviet leadership, would rather fight on NATO's territory than on its own. They believe that, especially given the character of modern technologies, the offense is favored in the offense/defense balance. But Soviet strategists do have options short of preemption, and ones in which they do not fire the first shot.

Soviet military theorists are currently warning the political leadership that in the event of hostilities, measures should be taken immediately to bring the forces to full combat readiness. The military, which is devoting a great deal of attention to the failure of Stalin in 1941 to heed strategic warnings of the German attack and the consequent failure to mobilize, keeps reminding the political leadership that Stalin's fear of provoking Hitler almost proved to be fatal. Chastened by the experiences of 1941, the military plans as if its prerogatives might be circumscribed by the political leadership. Some officers have noted that fear of "countermobilization" may again lead political leaders to delay mobilizing their forces.[45] We have (fortunately) little recent experience in observing Soviet political management of military power in a crisis. The few examples that we do have suggest that the political leadership has shown itself capable of tailoring its military responses to fit the political demands of crises.

Finally, indirect evidence suggests that even in the midst of the current war in Afghanistan, the hand of Soviet political authority is discernable. The military has clearly been constrained, in pursuing the "rebels," by the political limitations imposed by the Pakistani border. There have been airspace incursions, but—given the safe haven that the rebels enjoy—the Soviet army can only have been prevented from crossing the border because of the political costs of widening the war.

It should be noted, however, that these crises have been local in scope, and not severe. Control of the military forces in the kinds of crises that lead to world war may be another thing. Again, this problem is not unique to the Soviet Union. Political control of military prerogatives and initiatives is difficult and dangerous whatever the strategy or institutional arrangements. The balance between control of the situation and intrusive and dangerous micromanagement of the battlefield is hard to maintain. In a hostile political environment there is an irreconcilable tension between preparing for war and preventing it.

Conclusion: Will Loose Coupling Survive Gorbachev?

The attitude of the General Secretary toward expert advice has been important. Military issues are more complicated and the scope of Soviet

[45] Gareyev (fn. 8).

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military power is broader than it was in Stalin's day; it is unlikely that anyone could personally dominate an institution in that fashion again. In arms control, Gorbachev has been wildly innovative, at times without apparent regard for the advice of his General Staff. But the structural constraints of loose coupling are there for him just as they have been for his predecessors. Will he be content with the system as it is?

If Gorbachev's primary concerns are with the military economy and resource allocation, there are many sources of information, advice, and oversight that he can use to understand the economics of defense. He can strengthen his hand in that area through appointments to the Secretariat, a body that he appears to be reviving as a center of policy implementation. In his technical community, he has scientists and weapons designers who can advise him on the potential of expensive new weapons technologies. If Geneva and Reykjavik are any indication, he appears to be inclined to use that community fully.

If, on the other hand, he is interested in finding civilian experts to devise options for Soviet strategy and force posture, and to debate those issues with the General Staff, there really are no institutions to do that. There have long been rumors that the International Department of the Central Committee or one of the Academy institutes would become more active centers for the study of national security issues. The recent formation of a military department (it was previously a section) within the International Department of the Central Committee is a step in this direction. General Viktor Staradubov, a military officer with considerable experience in arms control, has reportedly been transferred to that department. But these steps are still far from the creation of an apparatus large enough and with sufficient access to information and expertise to challenge the General Staff. A department of this kind could be very useful in providing an institutional home for the consideration of political-military issues.

The Soviet Union's expanding role in the third world is a case in point. Small-scale operations like Angola or Ethiopia, which have a strong political component as well as a military side, require significant political-military coordination. The inability of the Soviet military to subdue the Afghan resistance may cause the political leadership to wonder just how much the General Staff knows about the third world and limited wars, where political skill and military force go hand in hand.[46]

The Soviet military will have to face the fact that the wartime contingencies that dominate most of the military-scientific debate—confronta-

[46] I am debted to David Albright and to Gary Sojka for their insights on the future role of the General Staff.

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tions with NATO and the United States—are those least likely to occur. The cold war has been, and will probably continue to be, a struggle at lower levels of conflict in remote areas of the world. The use of military power for symbolic purposes in the day-to-day competition with the United States will also continue. If the General Staff is incapable of adapting to these challenges, its role may yet be usurped by new institutions. The early indications are, though, that the General Staff is beginning to adapt. General Chervov of the Legal and Treaty Department spends a good deal of his time promoting Soviet arms control proposals—even those of questionable military value—abroad. Even press conferences by Soviet generals are now common occurrences.

It is, of course, possible that Gorbachev will want a civilian apparatus to help him understand issues that go to the heart of the General Staff's traditional domain. Recently, Anatoly Dobrynin pointedly stated that issues of war and peace could not be left to technical experts. Since the technical experts, at least on matters of war, in the Soviet Union are overwhelmingly professional military officers, this remark may have been directed at the nature of the system of defense planning itself. Matters like the impact of the aggressively offensive conventional military posture in Europe, or on the Soviets' political position there, may be precisely the kind of gap that Dobrynin had in mind. Interestingly, issues of political constraints on mobilization and readiness surfaced in a tentative fashion in work by professional military officers like General Gareyev long before any recognition of them appeared in the comparable political literature. The General Staff is not unaware of the political-military sphere; it may be adaptable enough to preempt the civilianization of those issues that are close to the heart of military strategy. In any case, a civilian staff would have to do a lot of catching up if it wanted to challenge the entrenched military apparatus.

The present analysis says nothing about whether party-military relations will be without conflict. The party and the military have made the system work by being responsive to each other. When political authorities fail to accept military advice, the military grumbles, but there is no evidence that it can do very much about it.

The place of military power in Soviet foreign policy is not determined by the professional officer. It never has been. The Soviet Union has invested heavily in military power because the party viewed the international system with suspicion and placed considerable faith in military power as an instrument of foreign policy. If a party secretary wished to make heavy cuts in defense, he would probably face resistance from his

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colleagues at the highest levels of power long before the professional military could mobilize any challenge.

In domestic politics, the party is sensitive to and watchful of the potential of the military. That element of the historical and ideological legacy of distrust is still very much alive. Barring radical changes in the political environment, existing measures are sufficient to keep the military out of factional politics. Indeed, military officers who get tangled up in factional politics usually end up out of power. The "Zhukov affair," in which the Soviet Union's greatest war hero was unceremoniously dumped from the Politburo for political activity, is a constant reminder to the military that it is very risky to play party politics. The party holds the ultimate trump card; it can fire officers who are too ambitious, which is apparently what happened recently in the removal of Chief of the General Staff Ogarkov. The military is confined to advising the party of the best options for constructing the strongest and most advanced armed forces possible. It is not a perfect system of military management, but it has worked pretty well.

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Research Note

DECLINING POWER AND THE PREVENTIVE MOTIVATION FOR WAR

By JACK S. LEVY*

THE concept of "preventive war" is widely used in the theoretical and historical literature on international politics. It generally refers to a war fought *now* in order to avoid the risks of war under worsening circumstances *later*. To label a war as preventive is to provide a presumed explanation for its occurrence, but the explanatory power of the concept is diminished considerably by definitional ambiguities and by the failure to specify the antecedent conditions contributing to preventive war. In this study, I focus on the *preventive motivation* as a contributory cause of war. The concept of the preventive motivation for war is defined and differentiated from preemption and other sources of better-now-than-later logic, and the theoretical conditions affecting its strength are specified. These conceptual distinctions and theoretical propositions are illustrated with examples from a variety of historical cases, but I make no attempt to undertake a systematic empirical test of the propositions or an analysis of the historical frequency of preventive war.[1]

The Literature on Preventive War

The theoretical significance of preventive war derives from the importance of the phenomenon of changing power differentials between states arising from uneven rates of growth—long a central theme in the "real-

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[1] Until I complete my argument that it is more useful to focus on the preventive motivation as a contributory cause of war than on preventive war as a type of war, I will continue to refer to the concept of "preventive war" in my review of the literature.

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ist" literature on international politics. The idea can be traced to Thucydides' argument that "what made the Peloponnesian War inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused in Sparta." Similarly, Michael Howard maintains that the causes of most wars can be found in "perceptions by statesmen of the growth of hostile power and the fears for the restriction, if not the extinction, of their own." Morgenthau refers to preventive war as a necessary means of maintaining equilibrium in the system. Gilpin concludes that, "according to realism, the fundamental cause of wars among states and changes in international systems is the uneven growth of power among states."[2]

Changes in relative power capabilities generated by differential rates of national growth have recently received even greater emphasis in Organski's power transition theory, which suggests that war is most likely during the periods when the power capabilities of a rising and dissatisfied challenger begin to approach those of the leading state. This hypothesis has been incorporated into much of the recent literature on world systems dynamics and hegemonic transitions.[3] In addition, many theorists have expressed great concern about the military as well as the economic stability of the contemporary era in the face of the decline of American power or "hegemony."[4]

There is some disagreement among theorists regarding the causal mechanism by which power transitions lead to war. One point that is central to Organski's theory but less important in the other formulations concerns the identity of the aggressor or initiator of the war. Organski and Kugler argue that the weaker but rising challenger initiates the war against the dominant power. On theoretical grounds, however, there is no compelling reason to accept this hypothesis over the alternative prop-

[2] Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, trans. by Rex Warner (New York: Penguin, 1954), 1/23; Michael Howard, *The Causes of Wars* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 18; Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 4th ed. (New York: Knopf, 1967), 202-3; Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 94.

[3] A.F.K. Organski, *World Politics*, 2d ed. (New York: Knopf, 1968), chap. 12. For other theories of hegemonic transitions, see Gilpin (fn. 2); George Modelski, "The Long Cycle of Global Politics and the Nation-State," *Comparative Studies of Society and History* 20 (April 1978), 214-35; William R. Thompson, ed., *Contending Approaches to World System Analysis* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1983); Charles F. Doran, "Power Cycle Theory and the Contemporary State System," *ibid.*, 165-82; Raimo Väyrynen, "Economic Cycles, Power Transitions, Political Management and Wars between Major Powers," *International Studies Quarterly* 27 (December 1983), 389-418; Christopher Chase-Dunn, "Interstate System and Capitalist World-Economy: One Logic or Two?" *International Studies Quarterly* 25 (March 1981), 19-42.

[4] Gilpin (fn. 2), 231-44; Robert O. Keohane, "Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond," in Ada W. Finifter, ed., *Political Science: The State of the Discipline* (Washington, DC: American Political Science Association, 1983), chap. 16; George Modelski and Patrick M. Morgan, "Understanding Global War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 29 (September 1985), 391-417.

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osition that the dominant power initiates preventive action to block the rising challenger while the latter is still too weak to mount a serious threat. Why should the challenger incur the risks of fighting while it is still inferior? Why doesn't it wait until existing trends in economic and military power, which Organski and Kugler consider to be irreversible, catapult it into the stronger position? Organski concedes the plausibility of this alternative hypothesis, and mentions the possibility of "a preventive war launched by the dominant nation to destroy a competitor before it became strong enough to upset the existing international order." He notes, however, that in recent history, it has been the challengers—Germany, Italy, and Japan—who "attacked the dominant nation and its allies long before they equaled them in power," and generalizes that initiation by the challenger is the standard pattern.[5]

The idea of a preventive war by the dominant power to weaken or destroy a rising challenger while that opportunity is still available is asserted by Gilpin to be the "most attractive response" open to a dominant power in decline, and its importance is widely recognized in the historical literature.[6] Schroeder asserts that "preventive wars, even risky preventive wars, are not extreme anomalies in politics. . . . They are normal, even common, tools of statecraft. . . ." A.J.P. Taylor argues:

> The war of 1866, like the war of 1859 before it and the wars of 1870 and 1914 after it, was launched by the conservative Power, the Power standing on the defensive, which, baited beyond endurance, broke out on its tormentors. Every war between Great Powers [in the 1848-1918 period] started as a preventive war, not a war of conquest.

Anderson refers to Prussia's attack against Austria in 1756 as "the most famous preventive war in history." Numerous other cases have been described as preventive wars.[7]

The role of the preventive motivation in the 1914 case in particular has attracted a great deal of attention from historians;[8] some recent work by political scientists on World War I has also focused on this variable. The

[5] A.F.K. Organski and Jacek Kugler, *The War Ledger* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), chaps. 1 and 3; Organski (fn. 3), 371. Note that the identification of leader and challenger is critically dependent upon the conception of the geographical scope of the system and the basis of power in the system. See Jack S. Levy, "Theories of General War," *World Politics* 37 (April 1985), 344-74.

[6] Gilpin (fn. 2), 191, 201.

[7] Paul W. Schroeder, "World War I as Galloping Gertie: A Reply to Joachim Remak," *Journal of Modern History 44* (September 1972), 319-45; A.J.P. Taylor, *The Struggle for the Mastery of Europe, 1848-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), 166; M. S. Anderson, *18th-Century Europe, 1713-1789* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 34. For other cases, see Jack S. Levy and Rick Collis, "Power-Cycle Theory and the Preventive Motivation: A Preliminary Empirical Investigation," paper presented to the American Political Science Association, New Orleans, August 1985.

[8] Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War* (New York: Norton, 1961), and

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theoretical and historical work of Lebow, Van Evera, and Snyder, which considers both preventive war and a preemptive strike as falling within the larger category of windows of vulnerability and opportunity, has been particularly influential. Van Evera, Snyder, and others argue that World War I can be interpreted as a preventive war. Lebow is more skeptical, though he supported that position in his earlier book. He argues that strategic considerations were more favorable for Germany in 1905, 1909, and 1912 than they were in 1914, and suggests that cognitive and domestic political variables are needed to explain why military pressures for preventive war were rejected in the first three cases, but not in 1914. He also points out that the rising power of the Soviet Union did not lead to preventive action by the United States after World War II, and that the Soviet Union did not move against China in the 1960s. Similarly, the decline of Britain's world position did not lead to a preventive war against the rising United States in the late nineteenth century. In other words, sometimes impending declines in relative power lead to preventive military action and sometimes they don't—a generalization that draws additional support from the mixed findings of some recent quantitative work. The important theoretical question concerns the conditions under which each outcome is most likely to occur.[9]

Organski attempts to answer this question by asserting (without discussion) that

> war is most apt to occur: if the challenger is of such a size that at its peak it will roughly equal the dominant nation in power; if the rise of the challenger is rapid; if the dominant nation is inflexible in its policies; if there is no tradition of friendship between the dominant nation and the challenger;

Fischer, *War of Illusions* (New York: Norton, 1975); Luigi Albertini, *The Origins of the War of 1914*, 3 vols., trans. by I. M. Massey (London: Oxford University Press, 1952-57); Gerhard Ritter, *The Sword and the Scepter*, trans. by H. Norden (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1970), Vol. 2; Immanuel Geiss, ed., *July 1914* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967).

[9] Richard Ned Lebow, *Between Peace and War* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 254-63; Stephen Van Evera, "The Cult of the Offensive and the Origins of World War I," *International Security* 9 (Summer 1984), 58-107; Jack L. Snyder, "Perceptions of the Security Dilemma in 1914," in Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein, *Psychology and Deterrence* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 153-79. Lebow's more recent position can be found in his "Windows of Opportunity: Do States Jump Through Them?" *International Security* 9 (Summer 1984), 147-86. Lebow's comparative analysis is based more on opportunities arising from a favorable dyadic balance of military power than on constraints and fears arising from an impending negative shift in power and potential, and may be more relevant for static power models than for a power transition hypothesis. For quantitative empirical studies bearing on this question, see Zeev Maoz, *Paths to Conflict* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1982), chaps. 4-6; Frank Whelon Wayman, "Power Transitions, Rivalries, and War, 1816-1970," mimeo (University of Michigan, 1983). For formal theoretical treatments, see James F. Morrow, "A Twist of Truth, A Reexamination of the Effects of Arms Races in the Occurrences of War," mimeo (University of Michigan, 1984); Emerson M. S. Niou and Peter C. Ordeshook, "Preventive War and the Balance of Power: A Game-Theoretic Approach," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 31 (September 1987).

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and if the challenger sets out to replace the existing international order with a competitive order of its own.

Van Evera and Snyder suggest that the likelihood of a preventive war or a preemptive strike depends on the magnitude of the power shift, the offensive/defensive balance, and the probability that the adversary will initiate a war during the period of vulnerability. These are useful beginnings, but there are additional variables that affect the likelihood that a state's decline in relative power will lead to preventive military action, and these complex processes need to be explored in further detail. A major purpose of this study is to propose a more comprehensive explanatory framework for the analysis of power shifts, the preventive motivation, and war. Before this can be done, however, it is necessary to refine the concept of preventive war, for its explanatory power is limited by some serious analytical problems.[10]

Definition of the Preventive Motivation

As Van Evera notes, the concept of preventive war is generally used in the literature to refer to a *type* of war, which is defined by a particular cause—the incentive or motivation for preventive action.[11] This might be useful if we wanted to restrict our attention to this one causal sequence and ignore other causes, for then the linkage between shifting power differentials, the preventive motivation, and the outbreak of war would be neatly summarized by the concept of preventive war. A problem arises, however, if our aim is a more general theoretical and empirical analysis of the causes of war. What we are ultimately trying to explain is the outbreak of *war*, not merely preventive war. Power shifts are neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for war, but one cause among many, the relative importance of which we want to analyze. The confounding of cause and effect in the single concept of preventive war makes it very difficult to analyze cases in which power shifts are not followed by war, in which wars occur in the absence of power shifts, or in which power shifts interact with other variables in complex ways. Each of these is necessary for a controlled analysis of the causes of war. It is precisely because there is no perfect correlation between power shifts and war that it is useful to conceptualize the preventive motivation as an intervening variable between power shifts and the outbreak of war. In addition, power shifts may lead to war through other mechanisms besides the preventive moti-

[10] Organski (fn. 3), 376; Stephen Van Evera, "The Causes of War," Ph.D. diss. (University of California, Berkeley, 1984), 72-76; Snyder (fn. 9), 160-61.

[11] Van Evera (fn. 10), 71.

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vation (for example, war may be initiated by the rising challenger rather than the declining leader), and the intensity of the preventive motivation may be affected not only by the nature of the power shift but also by other variables, such as historical antagonisms. An analysis of the effects of power shifts and other variables on the intensity of the preventive motivation (which is a continuous, not dichotomous, variable), and of the conditions under which the preventive motivation leads to war, requires that the antecedent, intervening, and dependent variables be defined and operationalized independently of each other.

Thus, the notion of *a* preventive war is not very useful for a theoretical and empirical analysis of the causes of war. The key question is not whether a particular war is preventive; instead, it concerns the relative importance of the preventive motivation with respect to other variables in the processes leading to war and the conditions affecting its intensity. After defining the concept of the preventive motivation and distinguishing it from other concepts with which it is often confused, this analysis will examine the conditions affecting the strength of the preventive motivation.

The preventive motivation for war arises from the perception that one's military power and potential are declining relative to that of a rising adversary, and from the fear of the consequences of that decline.[12] There is an apprehension that this decline will be accompanied by a weakening of one's bargaining position and a corresponding decline in the political, economic, cultural, and other benefits that one receives from the status quo; and further, that one might be faced with a future choice between a dangerous war and the sacrifice of vital national interests. The temptation is to fight a war under relatively favorable circumstances *now* in order to block or retard the further rise of an adversary and to avoid both the worsening of the status quo over time and the risk of war under less favorable circumstances later.[13] The situation is particularly serious because

[12] Note that the emphasis is on the decline in *relative* strength, consistent with the conception of power in relational and zero-sum terms. See Robert Gilpin, *U.S. Power and the Multinational Corporation* (New York: Basic Books, 1975), chap. 1. A state whose capabilities are increasing in absolute terms may have an incentive for preventive action if its adversary is growing even faster. Note also that the emphasis is on the *perception* of changing power differentials by state decision makers.

[13] Preventive military action is not, of course, the only possible "solution" to the problem of an impending decline in relative military potential. Future security might also be provided by alliances. Although the conditions under which states resort to alliances rather than to preventive military action is an important research question, my working hypothesis is that great powers are hesitant to rely on others to satisfy their *long-term* security needs. Alliances tend to be transient in nature and excessively affected by domestic politics and personalities; consequently, they are unreliable over the long haul. Moreover, alliances deal with the symptoms rather than with the causes of a future threat, whereas preventive military action sometimes

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of the tendency for states to give greater weight to losses than to gains. They are more likely to fight to maintain an existing status quo than to change the status quo in their favor. Preventive war is more concerned with minimizing one's losses from future decline than with maximizing one's gains by fighting now.[14]

This definition of the preventive motivation is broader than most that are suggested in the literature. In addition to the perception of a decline in relative power capabilities, one or more of the following assumptions are usually included: the preventer's perception of the inevitability, or at least high probability, of a future war; his expectation of being surpassed in power capabilities by the rising adversary; the preventer's initiation of the war; and his military superiority. Although it is common to define prevention to include the preventer's perception of the high probability of a future war, that is neither necessary nor desirable. Statesmen act on the basis of expected utility rather than probability alone. If they fear what their rising adversary *might* do once he gains superiority, and if they believe that this is their "last chance" to avoid a situation in which the adversary has the potential to do substantial harm, a war launched for these reasons should be considered preventive. The perception of a high probability of war may make a preventive action more likely, but that is a hypothesis to be tested rather than a definitional requirement for the preventive motivation. Similar reasoning leads to a rejection of the definitional requirement that the preventer perceive that he will soon be overtaken by the adversary. The same motivation for prevention would apply, though perhaps with less force, if the declining state expected only

provides the hope of dealing more directly with the source of the threat (though the true sources are often economic).

Another alternative to preventive military action, for certain states under certain conditions, would be an attempt to reverse one's decline through internal means, such as a policy of industrial revitalization. Although such efforts are more viable over the long term than the short term, this may be the preferred alternative if the immediate military threat is not too great. At this stage, the preventive motivation for war can best be analyzed by isolating it from alternative policy instruments, but ultimately the role of alliances and of internal change will have to be included in an integrated model. (The possible importance of industrial revitalization has been emphasized to me by David Lake.)

[14] My assertion that states tend to give greater weight to losses than to gains is consistent with recent findings from experimental psychology. If A is preferred to B, an individual at A would be willing to pay more to avoid dropping to B than the same individual at B would be willing to pay to move up to A. See Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk," *Econometrica* 47 (March 1979): 263-91; Kahneman and Tversky, "Choices, Values, and Frames," *American Psychologist* 39 (April 1984), 341-50; Jack L. Knetsch and John A. Sinden, "Willingness to Pay and Compensation Demanded: Experimental Evidence of an Unexpected Disparity in Measures of Value," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 99 (August 1984), 507-21. This phenomenon is related to the concept of framing and to risk orientation, which are discussed later. See fn. 45.

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to be weakened rather than actually surpassed in strength. Victory might still be expected later, but with less certainty and at higher costs.[15]

It is generally assumed that the preventer initiates the war, but this may not be true if the initiator is defined as the actor who strikes first. Even if the preventer wants a war, he may have diplomatic or domestic political incentives for provoking his adversary into striking first. An attack by the adversary would contribute to his diplomatic isolation and to the mobilization of one's own population behind the war effort (or at least minimize any domestic political costs of the war).[16] It is also generally assumed that the preventer must be the stronger actor, or at least perceive himself as the stronger actor. Yet the logic of prevention would also apply to a weaker state which perceives that its inferiority will increase in the future and that the status quo will deteriorate even further. Though such a state would be likely to lose a preventive war, the probability and costs of defeat in a later war would presumably be even greater, so that the expected utility of fighting now would exceed the expected utility of delay. Moreover, most of the hypotheses generated later in this study to specify the conditions under which a stronger state in decline is most likely to act preventively are equally applicable to a weaker state in decline; they actually explain why preventive action by a weaker state is so rare historically. My definition of the preventive motivation is thus not formally restricted to the stronger actor, though there are few historical cases in which the preventive motivation was an important factor in a war initiated or provoked by a weaker state in decline.[17]

[15] For other definitions of "preventive war," see Alfred Vagts, *Defense and Diplomacy* (New York: King's Crown, 1956), 263; Julian Lider, *On the Nature of War* (Farnborough, England: Saxon House, 1977), 63; Lebow (fn. 9, 1984), 154; Van Evera (fn. 11), 60-61; Organski (fn. 3), 371; Bernard Brodie, *War and Politics* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), 25; Gilpin (fn. 2), 191; Fischer (fn. 8, 1975), 468. Fischer's definition, which requires not just the perception of inevitability but also the actual intention by the target state to launch a war against the preventer within a few years, is very restrictive. It is also self-serving, for it facilitates his thesis of German war guilt and the argument that the German decision for war was not a preventive action deriving from perceived military necessity, but instead an unprovoked war of aggression. Because the concept of the preventive motivation refers to the motivation of the preventer, it is proper to focus on his perceptions alone, without including the intentions of the target.

[16] For example, German Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg insisted to the military that they must allow Russia to mobilize first. He was concerned about the reaction not only of England, but also of the Social Democrats in Germany who, he believed, would approve war credits only for a defensive war against Russia. Similarly, German Admiral von Müller argued that Germany should "present Russia or France or both with an ultimatum which would unleash the war with right on our side." Moltke later agreed that "the attack must come from the Slavs." See Fischer (fn. 8, 1975), 162; (fn. 8, 1961), 33; Fischer, *World Power or Decline?* (New York: Norton, 1974), 30. See also Vagts (fn. 15), 290-91.

[17] The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor may be one example. It should be emphasized that preventive military action can be taken by *any* state in decline relative to a particular adver-

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This analysis has been based on the implicit assumption that the perceived threat derives from a continuing long-term secular decline in a state's relative military power and potential—presumably the result of a comparative decline in economic efficiency and rate of growth. The preventive motivation may also arise in a situation in which the decline in relative power is expected to be more transient in nature, spanning years rather than generations. Such a power shift may result from a military reorganization, an arms build-up, the procurement of armaments from abroad, an advance in military technology, or the formation of a hostile military coalition. Each of these generates intermediate-term changes in relative power and temporary windows of vulnerability. Although the latter may be less serious than a long-term decline (in that states can resort to short-term expedients such as alliances or conciliation to provide for their immediate security), they may also have the opposite effect: preventive military action may be more effective in averting a short-term cyclical downswing than a long-term secular decline. In fact, temporary windows of vulnerability have been the primary source of the preventive motivation in several historical cases, including the Seven Years' War (Frederick's fear that a hostile military coalition would form within a year) and World War I (Germany's fear of Russia's increased strength by 1917 after the latter's military reorganization and the upgrading of her railroad system).

Analytical Distinctions

The preventive motivation for war is often confused with other sources of better-now-than-later logic, particularly the preemptive motivation. Whereas prevention involves fighting a winnable war now in order to avoid the risk of war later under less favorable circumstances, preemption involves the initiation of military action because it is perceived that an adversary's attack is imminent and that there are advantages in striking first, or at least in preventing the adversary from doing so. The two differ along several separate dimensions.[18]

One is simply the *time* that elapses until the actual threat of war ma-

sary, though it may be more common for the leading state in an international system or at least in a regional subsystem.

[18] This discussion builds on some earlier distinctions made by Van Evera (fn. 9), 64n; (fn. 11), chaps. 1-2. See also Snyder (fn. 9), 160; Robert E. Harkavy, "Preemption and Two-Front Conventional Warfare" (Jerusalem Papers on Peace Problems, No. 23, Hebrew University, 1977), 6-7. Note that the distinction between prevention and preemption applies across the entire continuum of military action, from the surgical use of force to all-out war. The Israeli attack on the Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1982 was preventive, whereas the Israeli attack against Egyptian airfields in 1967 was preemptive.

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terializes. A preemptive strike is undertaken in response to the threat of an attack that is perceived to be imminent, whereas preventive action is a response to a threat that will generally take several years to develop. Preemption is a tactical response to an immediate threat, whereas prevention is a more strategic response to a long-term threat. The *source of the threat* also differs. A preemptive attack is designed to forestall the mobilization and deployment of the adversary's existing military forces, whereas prevention aims to forestall the creation of new military assets. Thus, the *consequences of the failure to act* are different for the preventer and the preemptor. The preemptor perceives (by definition) that the near-certain consequence of his failure to attack is an attack by the adversary. He knows that he will probably have no opportunity to reverse his decision, no opportunity to monitor the adversary's behavior and respond appropriately. For the preventor, the consequence of non-action is not an imminent attack by the adversary; instead, it is the gradual deterioration of his own relative military power and the risk of a more costly war from a position of inferiority. He still may have time to attempt to reverse his decline in relative power capabilities through internal economic, political, or military changes; to secure allies; to attempt to mend relations with the threatening adversary; to adjust to the changing distribution of power; to wait and see if the anticipated threat actually materializes; or to fight a preventive (or preemptive) war later if conditions warrant it.[19]

Thus, the *incentives to strike first* are different for the preemptor and the preventer. The preemptor, by definition, has an incentive to strike first, which may be intensified by a military technology favoring the offense or by the existence of military doctrines emphasizing the offensive.[20] The preventer does not necessarily have an incentive to strike first. It may be desirable for diplomatic and domestic political reasons to induce an adversary to strike first; and it may also be feasible because of the margin of safety provided by the preventer's own military superiority (assuming he is stronger).[21] Note that the incentive to preempt does not require that the adversary have an *objective* incentive to strike first. All that is necessary is

[19] The less time for these corrective measures, the more similar the situation is to preemption and the greater the incentive for military action. The preemptive motivation is generally stronger than the preventive one; the presence of both motivations is particularly destabilizing.

[20] Van Evera (fn. 9), 63-65.

[21] In a crisis in which both states consider preemption, the stronger state may have an incentive to allow the adversary to strike first, as illustrated by Israel in 1973. The weaker state rarely has the luxury of waiting. For this reason, preemption is generally perceived as more legitimate for weaker states. This legitimacy reduces, to a certain extent, the potential diplo-

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that the preemptor *perceive* that his failure to initiate will result in an adversary attack, or at least that the probability of such an attack in conjunction with its expected costs require preemptive action.[22] These differences in incentives for the preventer and the preemptor are related to differences in their *military strength*. Whereas a preventer is usually the militarily stronger state, a preemptor may be either the weaker or the stronger; for reasons discussed above, he is usually the weaker.[23]

Because the concepts of preventive and preemptive motivations can be distinguished along a number of dimensions, a theory of preemption cannot be used to explain preventive action. A separate analysis of the conditions determining the strength of the preventive motivation is necessary.[24]

It is conceivable, of course, that a state may find itself in both a preemptive and a preventive situation: it may perceive that its failure to attack may result not only in the gradual decline in its relative military power but also in an imminent attack by the adversary; that may have been the situation perceived by Germany in late July 1914. In this case, the preference for war and the incentive to strike first are particularly strong. It is also possible for war to be simultaneously preventive for one state and preemptive for its adversary: *B*'s recognition that *A* is preparing for preventive action may lead *B* to preempt, which may play exactly into *A*'s

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matic and domestic political costs of preemption, and thus makes such preemption more likely.

[22] Van Evera (fn. 9, p. 64) and Snyder (fn, 9, p. 160 n.) argue that preemption involves the simultaneous incentive by both parties to strike first, whereas with prevention, the incentive is one-way. My analysis suggests that they are wrong on both counts.

[23] There are some secondary differences between prevention and preemption. Whereas the preventer basically "wants war" in the sense that it would demand enormous concessions by the adversary and make few (if any) of its own in order to avoid war, that is not necessarily true for the preemptor, who may prefer to avoid war but feel compelled by circumstances to preempt. Finally, even when prevention involves (as it usually does) the perception of a high probability of a future war, the preemptor perceives the probability of an immediate war to be even greater.

[24] "Windows" generated by the anticipated formation of a hostile military coalition present some analytical problems, for they blur the distinction between preemption and prevention. The greater the certainty that such a coalition will form—and particularly if it has already formed—the greater the expected likelihood that war will follow, and consequently the greater the incentive to strike first. The situation then begins to resemble preemption more than prevention, and our hypotheses on the preventive motivation are less likely to be valid. An example of the preemption of a hostile coalition before it is formed is Frederick the Great's action initiating the Seven Years' War (see fn. 37); an example of the preemption of a coalition after it has formed is France's initiation of the Revolutionary Wars. Betts's argument that throughout most of the nuclear age the likelihood of preventive war has been "close to zero" while the likelihood of preemption has been considerably higher, is, if correct, but one example of the utility of this distinction. See Richard K. Betts, "Surprise Attack and Preemption," in Graham T. Allison, Albert Carnesale, and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., eds., *Hawks, Doves, and Owls* (New York: Norton, 1985), 54-79.

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hands.[25] In another variation, *both* sides may anticipate their own decline and thus both have an incentive for prevention.[26]

Preventive-strike logic should also be differentiated from other sources of better-now-than-later logic. One reason why a state may prefer war now to the costs and risks involved in delay has to do with credibility or reputation. Statesmen often believe that the failure to go to war when challenged, or at least to take firm action involving the risk of war, may lower their country's (or their own personal) reputation for resolve, and hence undermine deterrence and increase the danger of a future war by miscalculation. This incentive to take additional risks, and perhaps even precipitate a war to maintain credibility, may be particularly important for great powers in decline because their authority is most in doubt. Similarly, great powers may intervene in small wars in order to demonstrate resolve and to reinforce deterrence against their primary adversaries with regard to more vital interests. Statesmen's concerns for credibility are undeniably important in decisions for war, but they are analytically distinct from the logic of preventive action based primarily on declining capabilities. Statesmen may also decide to fight a small war now in order to resolve certain disputes before they become more serious, and in this way minimize the risk of having to fight a larger war later.[27] This differs from

[25] This situation raises a difficult methodological problem. If *B* preempts, how do we determine whether this is exclusively a preemptive action by *B* or whether it also involves the preventive motivation by *A*? These situations cannot be distinguished on *behavioral* grounds alone, for observed state behavior may be identical in the two situations. It is therefore necessary to examine the actual motivations of *A*'s decision makers in order to determine if they wanted a war to block the rise of *B*, yet preferred that *B* initiate the war. This problem is complicated by the possibility that a state may launch a purely aggressive war for nonpreventive reasons but, for diplomatic and internal political purposes, will try to justify it as preventive action that is necessary in the face of a rapidly rising adversary and the inevitability of a future war.

[26] Mutual preventive motivations could occur because of a faulty assessment, by at least one state, of existing military capabilities and their trends in the near future. One example might be the Franco-Prussian War, with France fearing a rising Prussia and Prussia being concerned about the impact of French army reforms. Another might be the Russo-Japanese War, where the rising Japanese may have feared the completion of the Russian railroad in Manchuria. See Michael Howard, *The Franco-Prussian War* (London: Methuen, 1981), 54; William L. Langer, "The Origin of the Russo-Japanese War," in Langer, *Explorations in Crises* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 37, 40. Mutual preventive motivations could also occur if two states evaluate military power from two different analytical frameworks. A global power may perceive the erosion of its global dominance by a rising regional power; the latter may simultaneously perceive the erosion of its regional dominance by an expanding global power. For example, the attack on Pearl Harbor may have been in part a preventive action by the Japanese to consolidate their regional superiority before the opportunity vanished; at the same time, the United States may have undertaken strong coercive measures in part to prevent the erosion of its global power position by an expansionist Japan.

[27] Jack S. Levy and T. Clifton Morgan, "The Frequency and Seriousness of War: An Inverse Relationship?" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 28 (December 1984), 731-49.

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the preventive motivation in that it does not necessarily involve the perception of a decline in relative power capabilities. These latter situations also differ from preventive logic because the consequences of delay include not only the future capabilities and intentions of a particular adversary, but also the future behavior of third states.

This is an important point. The preventive motivation, as defined here and in nearly all of the literature, involves action against a particular adversary now rather than running the risk of a more costly war against that same adversary later. It is an intervening variable in a causal chain leading from changing power differentials to the outbreak of war, and describes national-level behavior motivated by a concern for a dyadic power relationship. It is subsumed under, but not equivalent to, the more general concern that the failure to act may leave one worse off. The latter concern would apply to any actor in any situation, but such a broadening of the concept of prevention would severely restrict its utility. Thus, a statement to the effect that "all wars are basically preventive" may be true in one sense, but it is not very useful.

Statesmen may also have domestic political reasons for believing that it is preferable to fight a war now rather than later. Under certain conditions, policy makers may believe that a successful war would increase or at least maintain their domestic political support. Such a war might satisfy specific interest-group pressures, exploit more generalized jingoistic sentiment, or distract the public's attention from internal social or economic problems through the creation of an external scapegoat. These causes of war may be important under certain conditions, but they should not be confused with preventive logic. The scapegoat motive and the preventive motive are analytically distinct, though both of them may operate in a particular case and reinforce each other.[28]

Perhaps the most obvious reason why statesmen may prefer war now rather than later is that they perceive vital national interests to be directly

[28] In fact, we might expect to find the preventive and scapegoat motivations to occur together frequently, for they may be the product of the same underlying processes. Economic decline often generates social problems and political insecurity for the elite at the same time it undercuts the military power and potential of the state. It is often argued, for example, that German and Austro-Hungarian leaders were driven to war in 1914 by the combined fear of the decline of German military power abroad and the rise of social democracy and disorder at home. V. R. Berghahn concludes that the ruling elites in Germany "were increasingly haunted by the nightmare of impending internal chaos and external defeat so that an offensive war appeared to be the only way out of the general deadlock." Berghahn, *Germany and the Approach of War in 1914* (New York: St. Martin's, 1973), 213. See also Fischer (fn. 8, 1975), 398; Ritter (fn. 8), 227-39. For more general analyses of the use of force externally for internal political purposes, see Arno J. Mayer, "Internal Causes and Purposes of War in Europe, 1870-1956: A Research Assignment," *Journal of Modern History* 41 (September 1969), 291-303; Jack S. Levy, "Domestic Politics and War," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (Spring 1988).

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and immediately threatened. If the adversary cannot be persuaded to remove the threat, war may be perceived as the only viable means of preserving those interests. This would clearly *not* be a case of preventive motivation, for which immediate interests are secondary. The more important the immediate threat to well-defined national interests, the less the relative importance of the preventive motivation. The "ideal type" case of preventive action is one in which there is no immediate conflict of strategic or economic interests, only the recognition of the state's deteriorating power position and the fear of potentially fatal consequences should an adversary resort to war once he has achieved a position of superiority. Recognizing that the preventive motivation may be more important than the tangible interests immediately at stake, Michael Howard argues that

> in 1914 many of the German people, and in 1939 nearly all of the British, felt justified in going to war, not over any specific issue that could have been settled by negotiation, but *to maintain their power*; and to do so while it was still possible, before they found themselves so isolated, so impotent, that they had no power left to maintain and had to accept a subordinate position within an international system dominated by their adversaries.

This theme is implicit in much of the balance-of-power literature. Morgenthau, for example, argues that, whatever the ultimate aims of states, their immediate objective is to maintain their power and prestige.[29] Preventive war is one response to the expectation of decline in relative power and the fear of its consequences. Let us now consider the conditions contributing to the motivation for preventive military action.

The Strength of the Preventive Motivation: Some Hypotheses

A first approximation of the strength of the preventive motivation for war can be determined by a rational cost-benefit framework based on expected-utility calculations, comparing the advantages and disadvantages of war now with those of delay. It will then be necessary to modify this framework by including misperceptions and domestic and bureaucratic politics in the analysis.[30] Before we begin, however, it would be useful to

[29] Howard (fn. 2), 16; Morgenthau (fn. 2). As Richard W. Mansbach and John A. Vasquez argue, traditional realist theory emphasizes the "issue of power" and minimizes the "power of issues." See their critique of realism in *In Search of Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981). See also Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1977).

[30] Recall that the preventive motivation is only one of several possible responses to declining military power and potential. A complete analysis would have to evaluate the relative costs and benefits of alternative policy options, particularly alliances. See fn. 13; also, Benjamin A.

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consider an important objection to the basic expected-utility framework guiding this analysis. One might argue that the costs and benefits of the rising state should also be included, and that the problem be conceived as one of bargaining. There is some level of concessions that the challenger would prefer to grant rather than to fight, particularly since he can always hope to regain those concessions later when he is stronger. Similarly, there is some level of concessions that the declining state would prefer to accept from the challenger rather than to initiate a war. If the challenger's offer exceeded the declining state's demands, war would not occur. Moreover, if both states agreed on the likely outcome of the war, they would be better off accepting that outcome without incurring the actual costs of war.

My argument, however, is that this problem is not best conceived as one of bargaining. The issue is not a conflict of concrete interests in which each party can easily calculate its gains and losses from different levels of concessions and negotiate accordingly, but a question of future influence over a range of diverse and partly unpredictable issues that cannot be calculated with any degree of precision and that are not easily amenable to negotiation. Moreover, the very intensity of the conflict tends to generate different perceptions by the adversaries of the stakes, threats, legitimate aims, and acceptable alternatives to war. It is extremely unlikely that any level of concessions exists that would be both sufficient for the preventer and reasonable for the challenger. The very fact that the declining state knows that the rising adversary will probably be able to regain any concession later makes the former less likely to accept those concessions. The kind of concessions most acceptable to the declining state would be those that impeded the further increase in the military power of the rising adversary. But the source of the challenger's increasing military potential is often the fundamental restructuring of his internal economic system in response to changes in technology and other factors of production, which cannot easily be bartered away. Moreover, it is unlikely that the political leaders of a rising state would accept an agreement that would condemn them to a permanent position of inferiority, involve substantial reputational costs, and generate enormous domestic political opposition. Such concessions can perhaps be successfully demanded from a thoroughly defeated state, but not from one on the rise. If the preventer chooses to block his adversary's further increases in strength rather than delay or accelerate his own armaments program, he generally finds that he has few op-

Most and Harvey Starr, "International Relations Theory, Foreign Policy Substitutability, and 'Nice' Laws," *World Politics* 36 (April 1984), 383-406.

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tions other than war. It would not be technically incorrect to introduce the defender's calculations into the model, but this would probably add far more complexity than explanatory power, and enormously complicate any empirical analysis.[31]

The Costs and Benefits of Delay

The most important factor affecting the strength of the preventive motivation is the preventer's perception of the extent to which military power and potential are shifting in favor of a particular adversary. This decline will have a direct impact on his future bargaining power and the distribution of benefits from the status quo, and an indirect impact on the probability of a future war. The greater the expected advantage of the adversary, the greater his relative bargaining position, the extent of the preventer's likely concessions, and the likely costs of a future war; hence, the greater the incentive for preventive action now in an attempt to impede the rise of the adversary. If the challenger's potential for growth is limited, and particularly if the challenger is unlikely to surpass the leading power, the preventive motivation is much weaker.[32] The stronger power may still have an incentive to maintain its margin of superiority, but in the absence of a more serious future threat, the potential costs of war may be too high.

An alternative hypothesis is suggested by William R. Thompson. He argues that "the probability of conflict is also reduced if the challenger's potential for growth is so great that its eventual rise to dominance seems inevitable. Both the challenger and the dominant power are more likely to have time to adjust to the likelihood of transition." This assumes the expectation that war would have no effect on the evolution of relative power capabilities. Statesmen have often convinced themselves that war will reverse or retard the rising military power of the adversary, however, and history provides few examples of states' nonviolent acceptance of their national decline.[33]

The rate at which the power differential is closing may be even more important than its ultimate magnitude. Whereas the adversary's ultimate

[31] For an argument reaching similar conclusions, see Bruce M. Russett, "Pearl Harbor: Deterrence Theory and Decision Theory," *Journal of Peace Research* 4 (1967), 89-105. Also see Betts. (fn. 24), 62.

[32] In cases where the preventer is not fearful of being overtaken in the near future, certain critical thresholds of adversary strength may still be important (for example, Israel's concern in 1982 about Iraq's acquisition of a nuclear capability).

[33] Thompson, "Succession Crises in the Global Political System: A Test of the Transition Model," in Albert L. Bergesen, ed., *Crises in the World System* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1983), chap. 5, 93-116, at 96; also, Organski (fn. 3), 376.

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power potential is distant in time and difficult to predict, his rate of growth is readily observable and therefore more threatening. The faster the relative rise of the challenger, the greater the incentive for prevention. A rapid rise increases the expectation of the declining state that it will in fact be overtaken and that it will be overtaken quickly, as well as the tendency to exaggerate these trends. It also reduces the declining state's time to increase its own power, gain allies, seek an accommodation with its rival, or otherwise adjust to the changing distribution of power.[34]

The strength of the preventive motivation is also an increasing function of the expected probability of a future war with an ever more powerful adversary, which in turn is a function of numerous variables. The greater the ultimate superiority of the rising challenger, the stronger his future bargaining position and his disenchantment with the present status quo, the greater his confidence in a military victory in the event of war, the greater his demands for concessions, and consequently the greater the likelihood of either unacceptable concessions or a future war. Admittedly, a pure power model cannot fully account for a decision maker's expected probability of a future war with a particular adversary. Britain, for example, was surely more concerned about the rise of Germany in the late 19th century than about the rise of the United States, and Germany was more concerned about the rise of Russia than about that of the United States. In addition to variables' modifying strict power ratios, such as geographical proximity and asymmetries in the elements of military power, historical antagonisms and ideological conflicts must also be considered. The importance of these should not be exaggerated, however, particularly for the leading state in the system, and especially if it faces one well-defined challenger in a bipolar situation. The threats perceived by these states and their subsequent behavior are usually determined primarily by their general interest in the configuration of power in the system rather than by their particular interests (including specific historical, economic, and ideological conflicts).[35]

A related factor that increases the historical importance of the preventive motivation is the tendency of decision makers, when faced with a rapidly rising adversary, to speak of the "inevitability" of war. When de-

[34] Organski (fn. 3) and Thompson (fn. 33) suggest that a rapid rise may increase the challenger's incentives for war, but this is less significant than the effect of a narrowing power differential on the stronger state.

[35] On the importance of systemic interests for leading states, see Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), chap. 8; Glenn H. Snyder and Paul Diesing, *Conflict Among Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), chap. 6; Gilpin (fn. 2). The incentives for prevention by a leading or "hegemonic" state will be particularly great since it has a disproportionate influence on the distribution of benefits and influence in the system. See *ibid*.

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cision makers perceive war to be "inevitable," they have fewer incentives to attempt to manage the crisis; instead, they concentrate their efforts on defensive preparations for war or on trying to ensure that it occurs at an opportune moment. As Bismarck remarked, "No government, if it regards war as inevitable even if it does not want it, would be so foolish as to leave to the enemy the choice of time and occasion and to wait for the moment which is most convenient for the enemy."[36] Perceptions of inevitability are also important because of their impact on the political decision-making process: the internal opponents of war are deprived of their most compelling argument, for avoiding preventive action will not help to avoid war. Perceptions of the inevitability of war may themselves contribute to the outbreak of war by generating self-fulfilling prophecies.[37]

The Costs and Benefits of War Now

The expected costs of delay can be a powerful motivation for prevention, but fighting a war now can also be costly. The critical variables here are the preventer's expected probability of victory and the associated risks of defeat, and the expected costs of each.[38] The greater the probability of victory and the lower the expected costs of war, the stronger the preventive motivation.[39] Although the degree of military superiority of the pre-

[36] Fischer (fn. 8 1975), 461. Though statesmen frequently use the term "inevitability," they presumably mean a very high probability of war. For one of the few discussions of this important variable, see Lebow (fn. 9, 1981), 254-63. Note that a limited preventive attack involves fewer risks and may be more common in the absence of such fatalism.

[37] A major reason why the preventive motivation was important in the Seven Years' War in Europe was that the war was perceived as inevitable by Frederick. See Walter L. Dorn, *Competition for Empire, 1740-1763* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 312-14; Vagts (fn. 15), 277; R. B. Mowat, *A History of European Diplomacy, 1451-1789* (Hamden, CT: Archon, 1971), 244-46. The elder Moltke's belief in the inevitability of war undoubtedly contributed to his advocacy of preventive action against France in 1867 and against Russia in 1887 (Howard, fn. 26, p. 41). In the period prior to World War I, the perception by German and Austrian decision makers that war was inevitable (against France or Russia or both) was critical. German Chief of Staff Moltke, for example, said in 1912, "I believe a war to be unavoidable and: the sooner the better." This fatalism was shared by political leaders and the general public as well as by the military. See Fischer (fn. 8, 1961), 29-38; Fischer (fn. 8, 1975), 162; Albertini (fn. 8), vol. II, p. 610; vol. III, p. 441; Ritter (fn. 8), 107; Geiss (fn. 8), 41; Sidney B. Fay, *The Origins of the World War* (New York: Macmillan, 1928), Vol. I, p. 43; Lebow (fn. 9, 1981), 255-57.

[38] In actuality, of course, victory and defeat constitute two ends of a continuous range of possible outcomes, each associated with an expected probability of occurrence and net cost or benefit. Note that the positive benefits from a victorious war may be a powerful incentive for *war*, but this would exist independently of declining power, and hence independently of the preventive motivation.

[39] This hypothesis explains why weaker states rarely succumb to the preventive motivation. If we control for the fear of the future or degree of anticipated decline, this hypothesis is valid for only a restricted range of probabilities. If the expected probability of victory is too large, reflecting an enormous military advantage for the preventer over a weak but growing opponent, there is no immediate threat to one's position and fewer incentives for preventive action.

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venter is the primary determinant of the expected probability of victory and its costs, other factors may also be important. Expectations regarding the possible intervention of other states, particularly great powers, may be critical. The diplomatic isolation of a strong and rising adversary is especially conducive to an incentive for prevention, as it reduces the costs and risks of defeat for the preventer.[40] Great-power intervention in support of the stronger state—that is, a "preventive war" by a coalition—is much less likely, particularly if the stronger state is the leading state in the system. The stronger the leading state, the greater its general interest in maintaining the existing system, and the greater the incentives to provide the collective goods for all by taking on the challenger. Other great powers are less concerned with systemic interests than with their particular strategic, economic, and ideological interests in specific issues. They have an incentive to free-ride and let the leader handle the rising challenger. Moreover, the stronger the leading state, the greater the extent to which *it*, and not the rising challenger, is perceived by other states as the primary threat to their interests, and the greater the likelihood of a general coalition *against* the leading state. For these reasons, a consensus for collective action against the rising state is unlikely to form.[41]

One factor that interacts with the dyadic military balance to affect the outcome of the war is the offensive/defensive balance of military technology, defined in terms of the degree of superiority needed by the attacker to overcome a defender. The greater the offensive advantage, the greater the potential advantage for a preventer who chooses to strike first, and hence the stronger the preventive motivation. This is particularly compelling if the offensive advantage is expected to persist into the future period of the adversary's superiority, for that would increase the seriousness of the future threat. In addition, the actual conduct of a preventive war is facilitated by offensive military doctrines calling for territorial penetration; states facing a decline in relative military capabilities may adopt offensive doctrines for this reason.[42]

[40] On the importance of expectations of intervention by third states, see Geoffrey Blainey, *The Causes of War* (New York: Free Press, 1973), chap. 4; Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *The War Trap* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980).

[41] Vagts (fn. 15, p. 290) argues that "preventive wars cannot easily be undertaken by an alliance or a coalition. Preventive wars are essentially wars of a single autocratic power acting alone or in absolute dominance within a coalition." On the tendency for great powers to align against the leading state, to balance rather than bandwagon, see Waltz (fn. 35), 126-27; Stephen M. Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," *International Security* 9 (Spring 1985), 3-43. The main exception is a situation in which the rising challenger expounds a revolutionary ideology which is perceived by other great powers as a threat to their own internal stability as well as to their military superiority (for example, revolutionary France in 1792). See also fn. 13.

[42] On the concept of the offensive/defensive balance, see Jack S. Levy, "The Offensive/De-

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Other Variables

Although the straightforward cost-benefit calculations provide a good approximation of the strength of the preventive motivation for war, they must be modified by other factors that may also have a significant impact. Among the most important are misperceptions, policy makers' orientations toward risk and uncertainty, domestic politics, and the policy preferences and political influence of the military.

The expected probabilities of victory and defeat and their associated costs—and hence, the strength of the preventive motivation for war—are greatly affected by misperceptions. Decision makers often exaggerate their own military strength relative to that of the adversary; they therefore overestimate the probability of victory and underestimate its probable costs. They tend to underestimate the likelihood of third parties' intervening on the side of their adversary and the likelihood of their own potential friends' staying neutral. They also tend to underestimate the military strength and impact of adversaries who intervene, and to overestimate the impact of allies who do so. The sources of misperception have received considerable attention and do not need to be elaborated here. It is useful to note, however, that the conditions under which preventive action is often considered are particularly likely to generate misperceptions. The greater the deterioration in one's position and the absence of alternative options, and, generally, the bleaker the future, the greater decision makers' motivated biases to exaggerate the feasibility of war as a solution to their problems.[43]

A decision to initiate a war for preventive purposes involves enormous risks and uncertainties, and the risk propensities of decision makers can have a significant impact.[44] This issue is particularly complex because it

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fensive Balance of Military Technology and the Incidence of War: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis," *International Studies Quarterly* 28 (June 1984), 219-38; Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30 (January 1978), 167-214. On the link between offensive doctrines and preventive war, see Van Evera (fn. 9), 64, and (fn. 11), 74-76; Barry Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), 69-70. The importance of this factor for preventive war should not be exaggerated, however, for the marginal impact of the offensive/defensive balance of military technology is greatest when the difference in military capabilities is small, but the preventive motivation is weakest under those conditions.

[43] On the consequences of misperception, see Jack. S. Levy, "Misperception and the Causes of War: Theoretical Linkages and Analytical Problems," *World Politics* 36 (October 1983), 76-99; Blainey (fn. 40), chap. 3; Lebow (fn. 9, 1981), 242-47. On the sources of misperception, see Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), and "Perceiving and Coping with Threat," in Jervis, Lebow, and Stein (fn. 9), 13-33; Richard Nisbett and Lee Ross, *Human Inference* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980).

[44] Risk refers to a situation in which the probabilities of different outcomes are known, whereas in a situation of uncertainty the probabilities of various outcomes are not known.

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consists of two sets of risks and uncertainties: the uncertainties inherent in a war fought now and the uncertainties involved in delay. The first set involves the inability to predict precisely the probability of victory in a preventive war or its likely costs, including the risk of an expansion of the war. The second involves uncertainties regarding whether, and how far, one's power position will continue to decline; the adversary's intentions once he achieves superiority; one's ability to secure diplomatic support or to appease the adversary successfully; and the likely costs of war in the worst case. It is not at all clear which set of risks and uncertainties will dominate. Will a risk-averse actor shy away from taking a preventive action because of the short-term risks? Or is such a war the risk-averse strategy in the face of the expected loss of one's military superiority? A detailed analysis of risk and uncertainty and their consequences cannot be undertaken here, but a few conflicting tendencies should be mentioned.

First, because the range of outcomes and the number and magnitude of negative outcomes are greater in the future than in the present, risk-averse actors might have a tendency to prefer preventive action and risk-acceptant actors to prefer delay. This assumes that the expected utility of preventive war and delay are equal for risk-neutral actors. The argument is reinforced by some recent findings from experimental psychology: individuals tend to be risk-averse with respect to gains and risk-acceptant with respect to losses.[45] To the extent that these rather robust findings regarding individual behavior are applicable to state decision making on security issues, we would expect that actors facing almost certain losses (military or diplomatic) resulting from declining military power would be inclined to accept a risky gamble in an attempt to avoid those losses—that is, to gamble on a preventive war in an attempt to halt or reverse their deteriorating situation.[46]

Because of the inherent unpredictability of international behavior, uncertainty is more important than risk. I shall use risk orientation loosely to refer to attitudes toward uncertainty as well as risk. Technically, the analysis of the expected utility of preventive war and delay is inseparable from an analysis of orientation toward risk.

[45] Given a choice between a certain gain x and a lottery involving an expected value $y > x$ (in typical experiments x and y differ by 20-30%), individuals generally choose x; but given a choice between a certain loss x and a lottery involving an expected value $y < x$, they choose to gamble and choose y. These findings are robust and contrary to the assumptions of expected-utility theory. They are generally explained by the tendency to give disproportionately high weight to nearly certain outcomes (the "certainty effect"), by the asymmetry of losses and gains and the steeper slope of loss curves, and by the tendency to frame the choice in terms of the status quo rather than of an absolute or arbitrary standard. See fn. 14. Also see John C. Hershey and Paul Schoemaker, "Risk Taking and Problem Context in the Domain of Losses; An Expected Utility Analysis," *Journal of Risk and Insurance* 47 (March 1980), 111-32; Robert Jervis, "War and Misperception," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (Spring 1988).

[46] This same experimental finding suggests that the rising state facing a near-certain future

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Internal political considerations relating to risk orientation may point in the opposite direction. Decision makers know that they themselves must bear the costs of a war fought now, whereas the costs of delay can most likely be passed on to their successors. Risk-averse actors, particularly those sensitive to domestic political considerations, will prefer to avoid the risks of preventive war and to leave to their successors the problem of conducting foreign policy in an era of impending weakness. Perhaps this is the basis for Bernard Brodie's assertion that the "willingness to gamble *now* at unlimited stakes for what is a highly speculative long-term gain," which is so essential for preventive action, is "normally most uncharacteristic of politicians." The relative strength of these opposing tendencies is, however, ultimately an empirical question.[47]

Bismarck's aversion to preventive war appears to derive in part from a tendency to focus on immediate uncertainties and to react cautiously. Many of his statements in the public and documentary record refer to the inherent uncertainties involved in preventive war and the need to avoid them if at all possible. In one of his most widely quoted passages, Bismarck declared that "preventive war is like suicide from fear of death." He rejected the notion that the danger of war in the future provided a justification for war in the present:

> The idea of undertaking a war because it might be inevitable later on and might then have to be fought under more unfavorable conditions has always remained foreign to me, and I have always fought against it. . . . For I cannot look into Providence's cards in such a manner that I would know things beforehand.

Bismarck also stated, in a passage that reflects his fears of the uncertain dangers of a war now as well as the lack of certainty regarding the inevitability of a future war,

> We have to wait, rifle at rest, and see what smoke clouds and eruptions that volcano of Europe will bring forth. A policy like that of Frederick at the outset of the Seven Years' War we shall not follow—suddenly attack the enemy who is preparing the attack. It seems, indeed, to break eggs out of which very dangerous chickens might arise.[48]

Domestic political considerations may also affect the strength of the preventive motivation for war. Internal social and political change may be a major cause of a state's decline in relative military power and poten-

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gain should be risk-adverse and prefer to avoid gambling on a risky war—contrary to Organski's argument (fn. 3) that the rising challenger will initiate the war.

[47] Brodie (fn. 15), 26.

[48] Fischer (fn. 8, 1975), 377, 461; Vagts (fn. 15), 290-91. Bismarck's interpretation of this case appears to refer more to preemption than to prevention.

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tial, either directly or, more indirectly, through its adverse impact on economic productivity and comparative advantage. The internal sources of Austria's decline in 1914, for example, were demographic, social, and political as much as economic.[49] Similarly, the anticipated increase in Russia's strength from 1914 to 1917, which was the basis for Germany's preventive motivation for war, derived as much from the reorganization of the Russian army as from underlying economic and industrial changes in Russia.[50]

The intensity of the preventive motivation may also be affected by bureaucratic political considerations, particularly the policy preferences of the military and their influence in the policy-making process. Pressures for preventive action are more likely to come from the military than from civilians. By professional training, they are more sensitive to military threats to their country's security, more predisposed to worst-case analysis, more concerned about a long-term decline in military assets, and perhaps more willing to resort to extreme solutions in order to avert any further decline in military strength.[51] Although military pressure alone is rarely a sufficient condition for preventive military action, it may be very nearly a necessary condition. It is unlikely that the preventive motivation could be strong in the face of military opposition; it would be difficult for civilians to overrule a collective military judgment that a preventive war would be too risky.

The political influence of the military is determined not only by the seriousness of the external threat to vital national interests, but also by institutional arrangements, by the belief systems and personalities of key individuals, and by political leaders' expertise in and knowledge of military issues and planning. In the case of Germany before 1914, Klaus Epstein emphasizes the institutional weaknesses of the chancellor's office under the Bismarckian constitution, Bethmann's lack of personal strength and prestige, and the absence of a tradition of civilian supremacy over the military in German political culture. Bismarck himself wrote that the General Staff's desire for preventive war was natural for such a military institution, and not necessarily a bad thing, but that he feared the

[49] Austrian Chief of Staff Conrad perceived that the nationality problem was dividing the army, and feared that in a country in which two-thirds of the population were Slavs, the army would soon no longer fight for Germans and Magyars. He questioned "whether we should wait until France and Russia were ready to attack us together or whether it was not more desirable to settle the inevitable conflict earlier." Fischer (fn. 8, 1975), 398. See also Vagts (fn. 15), 304; Ritter (fn. 8), 229-31.

[50] Fischer (fn. 8, 1975), 371, 399; L.C.F. Turner, *The Origins of the First World War* (New York: Norton, 1970), 74. Domestic politics may affect the outbreak of war, of course, quite independently of the fear of one's deteriorating international position. See fn. 28.

[51] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (New York: Vintage, 1957), chap. 3; Richard K. Betts, *Soldiers, Statesmen and Cold War Crises* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977); Posen (fn. 42), chap. 2; Vagts (fn. 15), 263.

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possibility of an aggressive chief of staff in combination with a weak and incompetent monarch and a chancellor without political perspective or influence.[52] The military cannot be viewed as a single actor, however, with respect to attitudes toward preventive war. There may be some divisions along organizational lines. While Moltke and the German army argued forcefully for war in 1911-12, for example, Tirpitz and the navy argued strongly for delay, and were able to persuade the kaiser to postpone military action.[53]

The general attitude toward war in society may also influence the intensity of the preventive motivation. The greater the extent to which war is viewed in Clausewitzian terms as a legitimate instrument of policy for the attainment of a wide range of national political objectives (and not just as a policy of last resort when the territorial and constitutional integrity of the state is most directly and immediately threatened), the fewer the domestic political constraints inhibiting policy makers from resorting to force, and hence the stronger the preventive motivation. This attitude toward war may vary in different types of political systems.[54]

Summary and Conclusions

The preventive motivation is an intervening variable between a state's decline in relative military power and potential and a decision for war. It is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for war, but contributes

[52] Lewis J. Edinger, "Military Leaders and Foreign Policymaking," *American Political Science Review* 57 (June 1963), 392-405; Betts (fn. 51); Klaus Epstein, "Gerhard Ritter and the First World War," *Journal of Contemporary History* 1 (July 1966), 193-210; Walter Goerlitz, *History of the German General Staff*, trans. by Brian Battershaw (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1975), 101.

On several occasions, Bismarck blocked military demands for preventive war. After he departed as chancellor in 1890, the German military gradually gained the upper hand. Although military pressures for preventive war were rejected in the crises of 1905, 1909, and 1912, these pressures had become much stronger in 1914. The political influence of the military was also greater in part because of the ignorance of military issues and planning by political leaders, and the resulting tendency to defer to the military on security issues. See George F. Kennan, *The Decline of Bismarck's European Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 364-66; Gordon A. Craig, *The Politics of the Prussian Army, 1640-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), chap. 7; Fischer (fn. 8, 1961, 1975); Geiss (fn. 8), 38-48; Berghahn (fn. 28), chap. 9; Jack S. Levy, "Organizational Routines and the Causes of War," *International Studies Quarterly* 30 (June 1986), 193-222.

[53] Divisions over preventive war may also follow generational lines, with the younger military officers being the most eager. Vagts (fn. 15, pp. 291, 306-8), argues that this was true for both Germany and Austria in the decades prior to World War I. See also Ritter (fn. 8), 308.

[54] This variable is potentially important but conceptually difficult, and is generally neglected. See Lebow (fn. 9, 1981), 247-54. Although the question whether democratic states are less war-prone than nondemocratic states has yet to be answered conclusively (though democracies almost never fight other democracies), it is not unreasonable to hypothesize that the *preventive* motivation for war is less intense in democratic states. See Steve Chan, "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall . . . : Are the Freer Countries More Pacific?" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 28 (December 1984), 617-48.

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to war in combination with other variables and other causal sequences. In this study, I have been more interested in developing a comprehensive explanatory framework for the analysis of the preventive motivation for war than in constructing a parsimonious and easily testable model. Consequently, I have not conducted a systematic empirical analysis to determine the frequency with which power shifts and the preventive motivation are associated with war, and have not empirically tested my hypotheses regarding the conditions affecting the intensity of the preventive motivation. It would be useful, however, to note briefly how such a model might be tested.

A preliminary test might focus, not on the individual hypotheses themselves, but on the causal sequence as a whole; it would examine the empirical association between dyadic power shifts and the outbreak of war, ignoring for the moment the role of perceptual and internal political variables. Given existing data on war and military capabilities, it would be possible to conduct a quantitative test of the simple power shift hypothesis for all dyads or for major power dyads for the period since 1815. The theoretical literature implies, however, that power transitions between the leading states in the system are particularly important. Because there are relative few cases of such transitions and of major wars since 1815, it would be necessary to extend the temporal domain of the study back in time to permit the analysis of additional cases. A useful starting point would be about 1500, for a number of historical and theoretical studies identify this as the beginning of the modern system. Although adequate war data do exist for this period, there are no data on major power military capabilities prior to 1815.[55] The collection of such data would be of enormous theoretical value, but the task of constructing valid indicators of military capabilities over five centuries would be difficult, and the actual collection of the data would be time-consuming and expensive. A less rigorous test of many of the above-mentioned hypotheses through a methodology of structured focused comparison would be a more immediately feasible alternative. A modest number of cases of power shifts, or decision points within the same power shift, could be examined in order to determine the conditions under which power shifts are most likely to lead to war.[56]

[55] The war and capability data for the post-1815 period are from J. David Singer's Correlates of War project, available at the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan. For war data spanning the last five centuries and a justification of the temporal extension of the system, see Jack S. Levy, *War in the Modern Great Power System, 1495-1975* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1983).

[56] Such an analysis would bear on the question of the sufficient conditions for war; a complete analysis would also have to consider necessary conditions and to include cases of unchanging power differentials.

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A related question—which has been mentioned but not resolved in this study, and which requires further theoretical and ultimately empirical analysis—concerns the conditions under which declining states choose to provide for their future security through alliances, an expanded armaments program, or other internal changes rather than through preventive military action. This leads to the more general questions of the conditions of peaceful systemic change, and what a rising state might do to reduce the pressure on the declining leader for preventive military action. These questions are, of course, important for contemporary policy as well as for theory.

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Review Article

THE STEPS TO WAR: Toward a Scientific Explanation of Correlates of War Findings

By JOHN A. VASQUEZ*

J. David Singer, ed., *The Correlates of War*, Vol. I, *Research Origins and Rationale*. New York: Free Press, 1979, 405 pp.
J. David Singer and Associates, *Explaining War: Selected Papers from the Correlates of War Project*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1979, 328 pp.
J. David Singer and Michael D. Wallace, eds., *To Augur Well: Early Warning Indicators in World Politics*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1979, 308 pp.
J. David Singer, ed., *The Correlates of War*, Vol. II, *Testing Some Realpolitik Models*. New York: Free Press, 1980, 328 pp.
Melvin Small and J. David Singer, *Resort to Arms: International and Civil Wars, 1816-1980*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1982, 373 pp.
J. David Singer and Richard J. Stoll, eds., *Quantitative Indicators in World Politics: Timely Assurance and Early Warning*. New York: Praeger, 1984, 221 pp.
J. David Singer, *Deterrence, Arms Control, and Disarmament* (with a new Epilogue). Lanham, Mass.: University Press of America, 1984 (first published 1962), 303 pp.
Alan Ned Sabrosky, ed., *Polarity and War: The Changing Structure of International Conflict*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985, 231 pp.
Melvin Small and J. David Singer, eds., *International War: An Anthology and Study Guide*. Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press, 1985, 393 pp.

Introduction

THE scientific study of war began with the hope and promise that the collection of reproducible evidence and its systematic analysis would result in a major breakthrough in our understanding of general factors associated with war and peace. That breakthrough has not yet occurred; the task has been more intractible than was thought. Nevertheless, during the last fifteen years an increase in statistical findings on war has contributed a new body of evidence and insight separate from those provided by history, traditional discourse, and political philosophy.

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These findings and the testing process itself have exposed some long-held beliefs as erroneous or confused. What is of greater significance is that these analyses may constitute the critical mass of evidence that could provide a turning point in the long effort to discover the causes of war. If that turning point occurs, a large part of the credit will have to go to the Correlates of War project and its director, J. David Singer, for it is in the research of the project and in the secondary analysis of its data that the main relationships and patterns are being uncovered.

The books under review trace the history of the project from the early theoretical and policy concerns of Singer that gave rise to the project, through the publication and listing of the major data sets, to ongoing data analysis. The review will begin by giving a brief history of the Correlates of War project. Next, some of the early epistemological criticisms made of the project will be examined in light of recent findings. The main body of the essay will be devoted to delineating what has been learned in order to synthesize the major findings into a coherent scientific explanation of war. This will involve a systematic and detailed review of the work on alliances, polarization, arms races, and crisis escalation. The analysis will conclude with a brief look at some of the findings that pertain to conditions of peace and the policy relevance of the project. Throughout the review, attention will be paid to the extent to which realist practices and conceptions either help to account for war or are misleading because they are incomplete.

The Correlates of War project began in 1963 with a grant from the Carnegie Corporation to the University of Michigan's Center for Research on Conflict Resolution; a part went to Singer to investigate the historical conditions associated with war. This early funding was later supplemented by several grants from the National Science Foundation.

The initial efforts concentrated on data collection. The first data set compiled by Singer and his co-investigator, Melvin Small, provided indicators and documented information on the frequency, severity, and magnitude of war since 1815.[1] It was followed by data sets on alliances, diplomatic ties between states, the number of intergovernmental organizations in the system, and the national capability of the major powers (based on demographic, economic, and military dimensions),[2] all of

[1] J. David Singer and Melvin Small, *The Wages of War, 1816-1965: A Statistical Handbook* (New York: Wiley, 1972). This handbook has been updated, and expanded to include new data on civil wars, in Small and Singer, 1982.

[2] See Singer and Small, "Formal Alliances, 1815-1939: A Quantitative Description," *Journal of Peace Research*, No. 3 (1966), 1-32; Small and Singer, "Formal Alliances, 1816-1965: An Extension of the Basic Data," *Journal of Peace Research*, No. 3 (1969), 257-82; Small and Singer, "The Diplomatic Importance of States, 1816-1970: An Extension and Refinement of the Indicator," *World Politics* 25 (July 1973), 577-99, reprinted in Singer, 1979, pp. 199-222.

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which were viewed as important indicators of the factors that might be associated with war.

Unlike some projects, the Correlates of War project has not been so diverted by data collection that data analysis has had to be delayed; instead, data analysis has proceeded hand in hand with data collection. From the start, the project has focused on conducting empirical research rather than trying to be merely a data bank for the field. Data have always been collected with an eye toward specific research questions within the project.

As new individuals entered the project, they brought research interests that helped generate new measures and new data sets. Scholars like Michael Wallace, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, James Lee Ray, Charles Gochman, Alan Ned Sabrosky, and Zeev Maoz, who entered the project while they were graduate students at Michigan, were instrumental in creating new measures for polarization, status inconsistency, concentration of power, arms spending, and new data sets such as that on serious disputes, as well as in updating and extending the original data sets.[3] Established scholars who came into the project had a similar impact. Russell Leng, for example, developed the Behavioral Correlates of War and collected data on bargaining techniques in specific dyadic conflicts. Stuart Bremer was a major influence in improving the methodological sophistication of the project. Frank Whelon Wayman, Urs Luterbacher, and Peter Wallensteen conducted important data analyses that broadened the research agenda of the project.

In addition to the above scholars, who might be regarded as core members, an invisible college has evolved around the project. Early on, Singer and Small decided that the creation of a science of international relations would be best advanced if they made their data as widely available as possible. This has resulted in a number of important studies by scholars who are not members of the project. These studies—particularly those by Wayne Ferris, Randolph Siverson, David Garnham, Charles Kegley and Gregory Raymond, Jack Levy, Michael Ward, Brian Job, and Manus Midlarsky in the United States, and Erich Weede, Henk Houweling, Jan Siccama, Nils Petter Gleditsch, Kjell Skjelsbaek, and Wolf-Dieter Eberwein in Europe—have produced findings that have extended and advanced the research program of the project and must be integrated into the corpus of the project's work.

As the project approaches its twenty-fifth anniversary, data collection and improvements in measurements have been invigorated by the 1986

[3] Other important analysts who entered the project while they were graduate students at Michigan include: John Stuckey, Yoshinobu Yamamoto, Hugh Wheeler, Cynthia Cannizzo, Michael Mihalka, Thomas Cusack, Richard Stoll, Michael Champion, and Paul Diehl.

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National Science Foundation funding of the omnibus three-year Data Development for International Research. Existing data on global war, alliances, and the recently collected information on civil war and serious disputes will be updated to 1985. More importantly, separate grants (including grants to individuals like Levy and Midlarsky who are outside the project) will fund the collection of data on inter-state wars from 1495 to 1815. Also critical for future research will be the collection of capability data on "middle" powers. This new funding will take data analysis well into the mid-1990s; before it begins, it is important not only to take stock of what has been learned to this point, but to reexamine some of the early criticism of the project.

Such criticism has come from both traditional scholars who eschew the possibility or value of quantitative analysis as well as from more quantitatively oriented scholars. Despite these differences in perspective, certain common themes have emerged, which can be grouped into three sets of interrelated criticisms: (1) The project is too inductive. (2) There is a greater need for "theory"; the project has failed to offer an explanation of war; the findings have not cumulated to provide an obvious and overwhelming support for a particular set of hypotheses about war. (3) The findings are complex and sometimes contradictory; their significance is not clear because of disagreements over the proper specification of propositions, the meaning and validity of certain indicators, and the use of particular research designs. In reviewing these criticisms, one must keep in mind the criteria that determine the *extent* to which any given criticism is valid, and the impact that a valid criticism has on the ability of the project to advance knowledge. All too often criticisms are presented as if they were such fundamental logical points that the endeavor being criticized is demonstrated to be worthless; a more constructive approach would ask whether a project has changed or can change its practices to meet valid objections.

The criticism that the Correlates of War project, as well as quantitative analysis in general, is disposed to errors of induction has been most forcibly argued in recent times by Kenneth Waltz. He argues that pure induction is impossible because, without a theory, one does not know where to begin, what data to generate.[4] Moreover, without a precise "theory," testing will not be done properly and much time will be wasted.[5] He further states that correlations can never of themselves get beyond accurate

[4] Kenneth Waltz, "Theory of International Relations," in Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, eds., *Handbook of Political Science, International Politics*, Vol. 8 (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1975), 9; cf. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), 5, 8.

[5] *Ibid.* (1979), 12-13.

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description,[6] and that knowledge is not going to be produced by accumulating more and more information.[7] For these reasons, he concludes that "in itself induction leads to a theoretical dead end,"[8] but qualifies that by saying that "we nevertheless need some sense of the puzzling connections of things and events before we can worry about constructing theories."[9] When he concedes this last point, one cannot help wondering whether Waltz has been arguing against a straw man. Who, for example, would dispute his position, "The point is not to reject induction, but to ask what induction can and cannot accomplish"?[10]

Certainly, no one can disagree with Waltz that pure induction is impossible, since without some theoretical assumptions, one indeed does not know where to begin. Singer's argument in favor of induction, however, does not mean that he attempted to collect data on every possible factor associated with the onset of war. His time and funding forced him and Small to place their research bets on the variables that they thought were most critical. Such decisions must perforce be theory-laden; they show that the practical constraints of quantitative research make for a very rapid narrowing of what is examined. It is no accident that the independent variables upon which Singer and Small spent the most time dealt with alliances and national capability, both of which have been seen as theoretically significant facts by the dominant realist approaches. Still, how alliances and capability should be understood in comparison to such other relevant concepts as the balance of power, preponderance of power, and polarity is not a matter of consensus within the field; and how alliances and capability are related to war and peace is still an open question. The variables for which data were collected were not "arbitrarily chosen,"[11] but reflected a paradigmatic consensus among traditional and quantitative scholars of international politics.[12] In addition, as the publication of the first volume of *The Correlates of War* makes clear, Singer had written about the factors he believed to be associated with war and peace long before the project began. (See also Singer, 1984, originally published in 1962.)

[6] *Ibid.*, 8-10.

[7] *Ibid.*, 4.

[8] *Ibid.*, 8. In an earlier version (fn. 4, 1975, p. 9), the term "theoretical" did not appear. This new qualification makes Waltz's argument true by definition, since the real question is not whether facts produce explanation, but whether the documentation of patterns through research is an essential step in producing knowledge.

[9] Waltz (fn. 4, 1979), 8.

[10] *Ibid.*, 7.

[11] Waltz (fn. 4, 1975), 7, 14.

[12] See John A. Vasquez, "Colouring It Morgenthau: New Evidence for an Old Thesis on Quantitative International Politics," *British Journal of International Studies* 5 (October 1979), 210-28; John A. Vasquez, *The Power of Power Politics: A Critique* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1983), chap. 5.

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What Singer and members of the project have not done is to try to improve the quality of the "theories" and explanations in the field before they test them; that is what really bothers Waltz. Waltz seems to be saying that, until the theoretical quality of the field has improved dramatically, testing will waste time. One can accept his description of the inadequacy of international relations theory without necessarily accepting the conclusion that testing must wait. From Singer's perspective, theorizing, conjecture, and speculation about war and peace have been going on since Thucydides without much advancement; why should more of the same lead to a major breakthrough? Even Waltz laments that "nothing seems to accumulate, not even criticism."[13] Part of the disagreement between Waltz and Singer is over which will lead to an advancement of knowledge—clearer conceptualization and harder thinking, or more careful observation and new information. Although an individual scholar may choose to emphasize one path rather than another, these two strategies are not incompatible, and a discipline should have some of its scholars devoted to each strategy, rather than everyone pursuing only one emphasis to the neglect of the other.

In this sense, while Waltz's defense of theorizing and deduction is a legitimate justification of his own work, his attacks on induction are too extreme. Such a position could only be accepted if there were in international relations a documented body of behavioral patterns (what Waltz calls *laws*). If the main task of the field were to explain known patterns, Waltz would be correct, but if the main task is to discover and confirm patterns—which can be explained once they are known—Singer is correct.

On the basis of this distinction, one can see that a fundamental difference between Singer and Waltz (and all who take such a highly deductive approach) is that Singer does not profess to know what regularities of behavior pervade world politics, and therefore he has nothing to explain until he has documented the regularities that do in fact exist. Waltz, on the other hand, knows what the regularities are (indeed, he may find them somewhat obvious), and sees his main purpose as explaining why they occur, and how and why they might change. In part, then, the argument over induction can be reduced to empirical questions: Are the regularities and "laws" Waltz wants to explain really known, and are they "laws," or, as Singer would argue, merely untested propositions? Can the use of the scientific method bring to light heretofore unknown relationships? If the scientific study of war is to be vindicated, it will have to produce a set of

[13] Waltz (fn. 4, 1975), 2.

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empirical generalizations for which it has adduced new evidence and which, at least in some cases, reveal relationships previously not recognized.

Ironically, as the scientific study of war becomes more successful in suggesting empirical generalizations, a second criticism—that there is a greater need for theory in the project—takes on more weight. Fifteen years ago, Singer was justified in maintaining that we must first describe the correlates of war before we can explain them;[14] that position now needs to be rethought because the project is succeeding in documenting a set of behavioral patterns. Thus, the argument of Waltz and others that explanation will not simply emerge out of description takes on new relevance. At a more fundamental level, it must be recognized that description itself is theory-laden;[15] without a more conscious theoretical perspective within a project—particularly one that is evolving into a larger, invisible college—it becomes difficult even to describe, let alone explain, the factors that are being delineated and to integrate them into a coherent set of generalizations.

This philosophical difficulty is accentuated by the fact that the research of the project has not been producing a clear line of evidence in support of one or more of the theoretical suggestions in the literature. In many (but not all) ways, the criticism that the findings are not cumulating is correct. Normally, in the standard view of science (justified in various ways by Carl Hempel, Karl Popper, and Imre Lakatos), progress is made by deriving a hypothesis from a theory, testing it, and reformulating or rejecting it in light of the results. In international relations, progress and cumulation has not come from following this deductive "logic of confirmation." If one takes this deductive approach, the findings *seem* much more inconsistent, ambiguous, and far away from cumulation than they actually are, since from the perspective of "confirmation" the meaning and significance of the findings are not self-evident.

The situation is much more encouraging, however, if one treats this research from the perspective of the "logic of discovery." If one takes the findings to be a set of clues or pieces of a puzzle, it becomes clear that research has made progress by testing a variety of hypotheses out of which a few highly suggestive relationships have emerged. For this more inductive strategy to succeed, the pieces need to be put together; but to do that, one needs a theoretical perspective.

In this approach, the findings would not be used simply to assess the

[14] Singer, "The 'Correlates of War' Project: Interim Report and Rationale," *World Politics* 24 (January 1972), 243-70, at 251.

[15] Robert Brown, *Explanation in Social Science* (Chicago: Aldine, 1963), chap. 2.

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tested proposition, but used imaginatively as a basis for *inductive theory construction*.[16] Explanations constructed in this manner would have to be retested according to standard procedures. Such an approach to theory construction is further warranted because, in my view, the evidence is trying to tell us that much of our conventional understanding about the causes of war and of peace is wrong.[17] Consequently, tests are not confirming propositions that lead us in obvious directions. Put another way, the kinds of research outcomes that have been produced within the Correlates of War project, as well as in related projects, are precisely the kinds of outcomes one would expect when many of the underlying theoretical assumptions guiding the research are wrong or flawed.

This leads to a consideration of the third set of criticisms, which involves whether specific pieces of research (or for some, quantitative analysis itself) can, in principle, provide a sound basis for observation and the generation of new information. Some critics have argued that specific pieces of the research have not properly specified some of the propositions they have tested (such as those on balance of power and on polarity); that they have made errors in research design; or that they have employed questionable measures.[18] The mere presence of these ongoing criticisms makes the project's findings and their meaning exceedingly complicated and difficult to interpret.

However, it must be kept in mind that criticisms on specification and measurement validity that were suggested by nonquantitative scholars like Jervis have also been made by quantitative scholars, including those within the project itself. In fact, there is constant discussion on these

[16] This approach follows the spirit of Jervis's call for the improvement of cumulation through the development of richer theories by asking questions such as: If this explanation is true (or inaccurate), then what else should follow? What are the implications? What other events should or should not occur? What does the theory say about cases or data not yet analyzed? See Robert Jervis, "Cumulation, Correlations, and Woozles," in James Rosenau, ed., *In Search of Global Patterns* (New York: Free Press, 1976), 183.

[17] Vasquez (fn. 12, 1983), chap. 8.

[18] On misspecification, see Dina Zinnes, "An Analytical Study of the Balance of Power Theories," *Journal of Peace Research*, No. 3 (1967), 270-88; Waltz (fn. 4, 1975), 12-14; Robert Jervis, "The Costs of the Quantitative Study of International Relations," in Klaus Knorr and James Rosenau, eds. *Contending Approaches to International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 177-217. On research designs, see the essays on the Correlates of War project in Francis Hoole and Dina Zinnes, eds., *Quantitative International Politics: An Appraisal* (New York: Praeger, 1976), 21-145; Benjamin Most and Harvey Starr, "Conceptualizing 'War': Consequences for Theory and Research," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 27 (March 1983), 137-59; Randolph Siverson and Michael P. Sullivan, "The Distribution of Power and the Onset of War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 27 (September 1983), 473-94. On measurement, see Michael Altfeld, "Arms Races?—and Escalation?: A Comment on Wallace," *International Studies Quarterly* 27 (June 1983), 225-31, and Michael Wallace's reply in the same issue; Gary Goertz and Paul Diehl, "Measuring Military Allocations," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 30 (September 1986), 553-81.

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points, only a small proportion of which finds its way into print. This criticism, as Michael Wallace points out, does not reflect an effort that is doomed to failure, but "the productive confusion of path-breaking science . . . [in which] a genuine scientific cumulativeness is beginning to take hold."[19]

The project's answer to these early criticisms of quantitative work has been to take this *type* of criticism seriously and to do more and better research in order to improve the quality of the work, rather than to abandon the entire enterprise, as some traditionalists were too quick to suggest. Certainly, the studies published in the seventies and early eighties are much better than those published at the end of the sixties. This is not to say that current research is above criticism and that measures and designs are perfect: part of the maturity of a science is the realization that progress is made through criticism and growth and continuous investigation, and not through the elusive search for a definitive test and measures that are so valid that they tap the entire robustness of a concept instead of just aspects of it.

If cumulation is to occur, however, there must be more explicit attempts at explanation through the integration of findings. The present review is an initial attempt, by someone outside the Correlates of War project, to piece existing clues together and build upon various theoretical suggestions within the project in order to construct a scientific explanation of war.[20] The analysis will begin by examining the overall picture of the factors that lead to war that is suggested by the project's findings. An explanation of war will then be constructed by looking at (1) how security issues arise; (2) how alliances are a response to the rise of security issues, and how they affect the onset and expansion of war; (3) the effect of alliances on polarization and changes in power, and how these factors influence the probability of world war; (4) how differences in findings for the 19th and 20th centuries can be explained by looking at differences in alliances and the role of arms races; (5) how arms races are a response to security issues; and (6) why some crises escalate to war and others do not.

[19] Michael D. Wallace, "Polarization: Towards a Scientific Conception," in Sabrosky, 1985, pp. 95-113, at 112.

[20] It should be pointed out that the Correlates of War project has not yet produced an integrated explanation. For Singer's view of what, in principle, would constitute an adequate explanation of war, see his "Peace Research and Foreign Policy Prediction" (Presidential address to the Peace Research Society) *Peace Science Society (International) Papers* 21 (1973), 1-13, reprinted in Singer, 1979, pp. 155-71, at 161-63. For his own review and assessment of Correlates of War findings, see J. David Singer, "Accounting for International War: The State of the Discipline," *Journal of Peace Research* 18 (No. 1, 1981), 1-18. For an early survey of a variety of studies on war, see Karl Deutsch and Dieter Senghaas, "The Steps to War: A Survey of System Levels, Decision Stages, and Research Results," in Patrick J. McGowan, ed., *Sage International Yearbook of Foreign Policy Studies* 1 (1973), 275-329.

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Explaining War as a Series of Steps

If we piece together some of the findings and theoretical suggestions made within the Correlates of War project, we get the following picture of the process that leads two or more actors to war, a process best characterized as steps to war.[21] As a situation develops that might portend the use of force, leaders and various policy influencers become concerned primarily with security goals and/or the use of force to gain stakes that they have been unable to attain up to this point.[22] In order to test their rival and to demonstrate resolve, leaders rely on threats and coercive tactics, which involves them in crises (or serious disputes).[23] Leaders respond to a crisis and to security issues that are perceived as posing a long-term threat by attempting to increase their military power through alliances and/or a military build-up.[24] In a tense environment, military build-ups lead to arms races, and alliance-making may result in a polarization (of blocs), both of which increase insecurity. In serious disputes between equals, actors employ realpolitik tactics.[25] Eventually a dispute arises that escalates to war. Disputes or crises are most likely to escalate if there is an ongoing arms race,[26] and if (1) they are triggered by physical threats to vital issues;[27] (2) they are the second or third crisis with the same rival (with realpolitik tactics becoming more coercive and hostile in each succeeding crisis);[28] (3) a hostile interaction spiral emerges during the crisis;[29] and (4) hard-liners dominate the leadership of at least one side.[30]

This process assumes that war results from a series of steps taken by

[21] Singer has suggested that conflict be seen as an unfolding escalatory process involving different stages; see Singer, 1980, pp. xxiv, xxix-xxx.

[22] J. David Singer, "Confrontational Behavior and Escalation to War 1816-1980: A Research Plan," *Journal of Peace Research* 19 (No. 1, 1982), 40.

[23] See R. J. Rummel, *War, Power, Peace, Understanding Conflict and War*, Vol. 4 (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1979), 186 on testing; Zeev Maoz, "Resolve, Capabilities, and the Outcomes of Interstate Disputes, 1816-1976," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 27 (June 1983), 195-229.

[24] See Michael D. Wallace, "Status, Formal Organization, and Arms Levels as Factors Leading to the Onset of War, 1820-1964," in Bruce M. Russett, ed., *Peace, War, and Numbers* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1972), 49-69; Paul F. Diehl, "Arms Races to War: Testing Some Empirical Linkages," *The Sociological Quarterly* 26, (No. 3, 1985), 331-32.

[25] Russell J. Leng, "When Will They Ever Learn? Coercive Bargaining in Recurrent Crises," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 27 (September 1983), 379-419.

[26] Michael D. Wallace, "Arms Races and Escalation: Some New Evidence," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 23 (March 1979), 3-16, reprinted in J. David Singer and Associates, 1979, pp. 240-252, and in Small and Singer, 1985, pp. 196-206.

[27] Charles S. Gochman and Russell J. Leng, "Realpolitik and the Road to War: An Analysis of Attributes and Behavior," *International Studies Quarterly* 27 (March 1983), 97-120.

[28] Leng (fn. 25).

[29] Ole R. Holsti, Robert C. North, and Richard A. Brody, "Perception and Action in the 1914 Crisis," in J. David Singer, ed., *Quantitative International Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1968), 123-58.

[30] For a justification of this assumption, see John A. Vasquez, "Foreign Policy, Learning, and War," in Charles F. Hermann, Charles Kegley, Jr., and James N. Rosenau, eds., *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy* (Winchester, MA: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 366-83.

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each side. Each step produces, in succession, a situation that encourages the adoption of foreign policy practices which set the stage for the involved parties' taking another step that is closer to war. This assumption suggests that those explanations that see war as a "rational" response to changes in power are, at best, incomplete; at times, they distort the nature of the underlying process by making it appear simpler and more deterministic than it is. Bueno de Mesquita, for example, argues that his rational expected-utility theory delineates only the necessary conditions of war, not the sufficient conditions.[31] While his theory tells something about last-minute calculations and who is likely to initiate and win wars, it does not tell us why actors resort to force and war in the first place. In a different way, many of the power-cycle theories, such as those of Organski/Kugler, Gilpin, and Modelski/Thompson simply state that fundamental shifts in power will result in war; they leave out the details.[32] It is in the presence of these theoretical hedgehogs that the empirical foxes of the Correlates of War project make their most important contribution. For it is precisely the details that they have patiently, over the years, tried to sniff out.

The Rise of Security Issues

The beginnings of wars can be traced to those situations in which some leaders believe that their state's security is threatened and start to take measures to protect themselves. Contrary to realist assertions, however, not all actors, particularly states, are always engaged in a struggle for power. It seems more accurate to assume that security issues and the power-politics behavior associated with them only occur at certain stages in inter-state relationships and predominate only in certain periods of history.[33]

[31] Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *The War Trap* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 4-5.

[32] A.F.K. Organski and Jacek Kugler, *The War Ledger* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); George Modelski, "The Long Cycle of Global Politics and the Nation State," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 20 (April 1978), 214-35; William R. Thompson, "Succession Crises in the Global Political System: A Test of the Transition Model," in Albert Bergesen, ed., *Crises in the World System* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1983), 93-116. For an attempt to get at some of the details, see Charles F. Doran and Wes Parsons, "War and the Cycle of Relative Power," *American Political Science Review* 74 (December 1980), 947-65. For a thoughtful review of this type of explanation, see Jack S. Levy, "Theories of General War," *World Politics* 37 (April 1985), 344-74.

[33] War is a relatively rare event. Only 67 inter-state and 51 other wars (involving at least one nation-state against a nonrecognized state) were fought between 1816 and 1980 (Small and Singer, 1982, pp. 59-60). According to these data, war is even a rarer event in the history of specific inter-state relations. Peter Wallensteen shows that some periods of history—namely 1816-1848, 1871-1895, 1919-1932, 1963-1976—are devoid of major-power wars and

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If realists have been generally too alarmist in their assumptions about the pervasiveness of war and threats to security, they have been more accurate in *describing* the kinds of behavior associated with the rise of security issues. Such issues are usually raised by one actor testing another's willingness to use his capability (diplomatic, economic, or military) to maintain a given distribution of political stakes. In such a situation, actors believe that victory is most likely to be associated with some demonstration of resolve; that is, making it credible that they are more willing than the other side to use force, and risk escalation and war, either to defend or to advance their position.[34]

It is logical to assume that only after such threats appear, and especially if they are perceived as long-term threats, will actors seek allies or build up their military. The research on this question and on the factors that precede alliance-making and military build-ups has been neither extensive nor conclusive, however.[35] Most research within the Correlates of War project has centered, instead, on the effects of alliances, capabilities, and arms races; it is in these areas that the project has made its contributions.

Responding to Security Issues: Alliances

Research on alliances has produced two major conclusions. First, alliances do not prevent war or promote peace; instead, they are associated with war, although they are probably not a cause of war. Second, the major consequence of alliances is to expand the war once it has started; in this way, alliances are important in accounting for the magnitude and severity of war.

The major evidence that alliances do not prevent war, but are associated with it, is presented in an article by Jack Levy, who supplements his own data on alliances and war in the 16th through 18th centuries with Correlates of War data on the 19th and 20th.[36] The longer perspective

have few military confrontations; see Wallensteen, "Universalism vs. Particularism: On the Limits of Major Power Order," *Journal of Peace Research* 21 (No. 3, 1984), 243-57, at 245-46.

[34] For evidence, see Maoz (fn. 23); Russell J. Leng, "Influence Strategies and Interstate Conflict," in Singer, 1980, pp. 124-57; Leng (fn. 25).

[35] Within the project, the work most relevant to these questions is by Michael Wallace (fn. 24). For the factors that lead actors to become involved in disputes, see Charles S. Gochman, "Status, Capabilities, and Major Power Conflict," in Singer, 1980, pp. 83-123; and Zeev Maoz, *Paths to Conflict: International Dispute Initiation, 1816-1976* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982), chaps. 4 and 5.

[36] Jack Levy, "Alliance Formation and War Behavior: An Analysis of the Great Powers, 1495-1975," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 25 (December 1981), 581-613. A similar conclusion had been reached earlier by Singer and Small on the basis of more limited tests; see "National Alliance Commitments and War Involvement, 1815-1945," *Peace Research Society (Interna-*

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provides a critical insight: Levy finds that, except for the 19th century, the majority of alliances (56 to 100 percent, depending on type) have been followed, within five years of their formation, by war involving at least one of the allies. Moreover, *all* great-power alliances in the 16th, 17th, and 20th centuries have been followed, within five years, by a war involving a great power. These findings do not hold for the 19th century, during which only 44 percent of all alliances were followed by war (compared with 89 percent, 73 percent, and 81 percent in the 17th, 18th, and 20th centuries), and *none* of the great-power alliances were followed by a great-power war within five years of their initiation.[37]

The data on the 19th century show that wars do not always have to result from alliances, but that in the other centuries they often did. Levy also finds that alliances are not a necessary element in war, in that most wars occur without an alliance preceding them. (From the 16th to the 20th century, only 26 percent of the wars, on average, were preceded by an alliance involving one of the war participants).[38] Clearly, such evidence goes a long way in dispelling the notion that alliances promote peace; nevertheless, how much of a factor they play in causing war is difficult to discern, since actors may join alliances because they anticipate war.

Further evidence that alliances are associated with war is provided by Ostrom and Hoole. In a reformulation of some of the propositions on alliance aggregation and war examined by Singer and Small, they compare the number of dyads experiencing inter-state war with the number of dyads having defense alliances. They find that within the first three years of alliance formation, as the number of alliance dyads increases, so does the number of war dyads. After three years, this positive correlation is reversed, and the more alliance commitments, the fewer war dyads. After twelve years, there is no relationship. This suggests that soon after alliances are made, there is a danger of war, but four to twelve years later there is not. After twelve years, it is probably a new game in which old alliances are irrelevant to questions of war and peace.[39]

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tional) Papers 5 (1966), 109-40, and Singer and Small, "Foreign Policy Indicators: Predictors of War in History and in the State of the World Message," *Policy Sciences* 5 (September 1974), 271-96, reprinted in Singer, 1979, pp. 298-329, esp. 325-26.

[37] Levy (fn. 36), 597-98, esp. Table 7.

[38] But note that 60% of the wars of the 20th century were preceded by alliances, compared to 18%, 14%, 35%, and 25% of the wars in the 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, respectively. Levy (fn. 36), 599, Table 8.

[39] Charles W. Ostrom, Jr., and Francis W. Hoole, "Alliances and War Revisited: A Research Note," *International Studies Quarterly* 22 (June 1978), 215-36; see pp. 228-29 for the findings reported here. On the earlier tests, see Singer and Small, "Alliance Aggregation and the Onset of War, 1815-1945," in Singer 1968 (fn. 29), 247-86 (reprinted in Singer, 1979, pp. 225-64), and Singer and Small (fn. 36, 1966).

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Since the making of alliances often does not produce the results that were desired, it is unlikely that those who enter alliances can accurately anticipate their consequences. For example, a major purpose of entering alliances is to increase relative military power; but this outcome often does not occur, because the making of an alliance usually leads to the creation of a counteralliance. This makes for greater insecurity, and usually greater uncertainty, because of the possibility that one or more allies will not honor their commitments.[40] More importantly, alliances not only fail to prevent wars, but make it likely that wars that do occur will expand.

Two major studies provide evidence that alliances expand wars. The more important one is by Randolph Siverson and Joel King, both of whom are outside the project.[41] The authors hypothesize that a war between two states that do not have allies has a much lower probability of spreading than a war between states that do have allies. Using Correlates of War data on inter-state wars from 1815 to 1965, they identify 188 instances in which an actor participated in war (note that 50 inter-state wars generated these 188 participations). In 112 of these incidents an actor fought in coalition with others, and in 76 it fought alone. What determines whether a war will involve a coalition and not just dyadic combat? Of the 112 participants who fought war in a coalition, 76 had prewar alliance bonds and 36 did not. Conversely, of the 76 participants who fought the war alone, 52 had made no prewar alliances and only 24 had. (Yule's $Q = .64$.) This means that when a war breaks out among states that have alliances with nonbelligerents, these nonbelligerents are likely to be drawn in. In this way, alliances act as a contagion mechanism by which war spreads and expands. Hence, it might be expected that a system with extensive alliances will tend to have wars with many participants, whereas a system with few alliances will tend to have small wars. Siverson and King found that in 19 (38 percent) of the 50 inter-state wars that took place between 1815 and 1965, neither party had a prewar alliance. These wars tended to have few participants, with all but three being dyadic, and those three involving only three parties. Alliances, then, not

[40] Alan Ned Sabrosky, "Interstate Alliances: Their Reliability and the Expansion of War," in Singer, 1980, pp. 161-98, shows that even at the most fundamental level—whether an ally will fight on your side in a war—expectations are not fulfilled. More often than not, allies remain neutral (p. 176). In addition, some alliances, like neutrality pacts (especially those between major and minor powers) are more likely to be violated than honored; i.e., if one party (especially a major power) enters the war, it will enter against its ally (particularly if the ally is a minor power) (p. 196).

[41] Siverson and King, "Alliances and the Expansion of War," in Singer and Wallace, 1979, pp. 37-49, esp. 45. See also Siverson and King, "Attributes of National Alliance Membership and War Participation, 1815-1965," *American Journal of Political Science* 24 (February 1980), 1-15.

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only fail to prevent wars, but by making wars spread, they encourage more dangerous, complex (multilateral) wars. Siverson and King point out that in 1870, France had no alliances and fought alone, but in 1914 it had plenty of allies.[42]

Indirect support for the hypothesis that alliances are associated with the expansion of war is provided by Yamamoto and Bremer, who examine three probability models to see which best explains (fits) the decision of a major power to enter an ongoing war.[43] The three models they examine are an independent choice model, which assumes that the decision of one actor has no effect on the decision of another; a one-way conditional choice model, which assumes that a decision to enter the war has a great impact on what others do, but that a decision to remain neutral has no effect; and a two-way conditional choice model, which assumes that whatever an actor decides encourages the other actors to make the same decision. Of the fifty inter-state wars between 1816 and 1965, only eight involve major-power intervention, so the sample is small. Nevertheless, the authors are able to show that the two-way conditional choice model fits the data better than the one-way conditional choice model, and much better than the independent choice model, which does not fit at all. This means that if a state intervenes in an ongoing war, it increases the probability of others intervening; if it remains neutral, it increases the probability of others being neutral.[44] Yamamoto and Bremer do not investigate the role of alliances, but simply find that, when faced with an ongoing war, major powers will do what other major powers do. Thus, once there is an intervention, the probability of other major powers intervening will increase. In light of Siverson and King's findings, one may infer that the presence of alliance bonds increases the likelihood of an initial intervention; once this occurs, other major powers eventually follow suit, whether they have alliance bonds or not.

All the above suggests that alliances are a key factor in the expansion of wars, but that they are not the only factor. Siverson and King point out that the three largest wars in terms of participants (the two World Wars and the Korean War) contain intervening participants who do not have previous alliances—two in World War I, eight in World War II, and six

[42] Siverson and King (fn. 41, 1979), 48.

[43] Yoshinobu Yamamoto and Stuart A. Bremer, "Wider Wars and Restless Nights: Major Power Intervention in Ongoing War," in Singer, 1980, pp. 199-229; see pp. 216-17 for the findings reported here.

[44] Although the two-way conditional model holds for both the 19th and 20th centuries, the finding is stronger for the 20th. Major powers in the 20th century were more likely to intervene in ongoing wars, and were more affected by what others did. *Ibid.*, 218-21. While this inference is based on a very small number of cases, it suggests that alliances in the 20th century were more dangerous than in the 19th.

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in Korea. Very large wars may involve other contagion factors.[45] One of these factors is contiguous territory. For example, Most and Starr show that a state with a warring nation on its border has an increased probability of becoming involved in a war in the next five years.[46] Contiguity certainly was a contagion factor in World War I, World War II, and the Korean War.

As a war spreads, especially through alliances, it is likely to become longer and more severe to the extent that intervention makes each side equal to the other.[47] In this way, alliances are probably more responsible for the severity, magnitude, and duration of war than for its onset. Since there is often an interval between the alliance and the outbreak of war, it is a legitimate inference that alliances do not directly cause war, but help to aggravate a situation that makes war more likely. They may do this in two ways: by promoting an atmosphere that polarizes the system and by encouraging arms races.

The Effect of Alliances on Polarization and Power

The work on polarity has been extensive, with the findings exceedingly complicated and sometimes inconsistent.[48] The reason is that different definitions of polarity have been employed: some studies are based on the number of blocs (sometimes called polarization or cluster polarity), some on the distribution of power, and some—most notably that of Wallace—on a combination of the two.[49] Differences in definitions have been further aggravated by differences in the measurement of both the independent and dependent variables and by differences in research design. Some, like Bueno de Mesquita, examine the entire system, while others, like Frank Wayman and Jack Levy, look only at major powers.[50] Although it

[45] Siverson and King (fn. 41, 1979), 46-47.

[46] Benjamin A. Most and Harvey Starr, "Diffusion, Reinforcement, Geopolitics, and the Spread of War," *American Political Science Review* 74 (December 1980), 941-44.

[47] Yamamoto and Bremer (fn. 43, p. 226) find that, when only one side is joined by major powers, the war is usually brought to a rapid close (the chief exception being the Crimean War); but when major powers join opposite sides, as has often happened in the 20th century, the war is more severe.

[48] See Singer (fn. 20, 1981), 8-9.

[49] Frank Whelon Wayman, "Bipolarity, Multipolarity and the Threat of War," in Sabrosky, 1985, pp. 128-31, shows that polarity based on the number of blocs and polarity based on the distribution of power are two uncorrelated and empirically separate dimensions (.01 for 1816-1965). See also his extended review of the various measures in "Bipolarity and War," *Journal of Peace Research* 21 (No. 1, 1984), 74-75. For Wallace's argument in favor of combining the two dimensions, see his "Polarization" in Sabrosky, 1985.

[50] Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, "Systemic Polarization and the Occurrence and Duration of War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 22 (June 1978), 241-67, reprinted in Singer and Associates,

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is far from obvious how the various findings fit together, a number of important clues have surfaced about the effect of alliances on system structure.

The most obvious effect of widespread alliance-making is that it decreases the number of independent actors, resulting in a reduction of what Deutsch and Singer call interaction opportunities.[51] Wallace and Bueno de Mesquita have conducted the most sophisticated studies of the reduction of interaction opportunities. Wallace finds no linear relationship between such polarization and nation-months of war and battle deaths (indicators most valid for the magnitude and severity of war), but does uncover a curvilinear relationship. The wars of the highest magnitude and severity are apt to occur when the system is highly polarized (maximum polarization would be two blocs) or had no polarization at all (minimum polarization would be no blocs); a moderate amount of war, or no war, is associated with moderate polarization.[52] This finding can be interpreted as meaning that when there are no alliances, the weak fall victim to the strong, but when most actors are bonded to two blocs, intense rivalry and preparation for war develop. One would suspect that the findings produced by very low or no polarization would be the result of many wars not directly connected,[53] while the finding on high polarization would be the result of large, multilateral (complex) wars, like the two World Wars.

Wallace also finds a moderate curvilinear relationship between cross-

1979, 113-38; Wayman (fn. 49, both articles); Jack S. Levy, "The Polarity of the System and International Stability: An Empirical Analysis," in Sabrosky, 1985, pp. 41-66.

[51] Karl W. Deutsch and J. David Singer, "Multipolar Power Systems and International Stability," *World Politics* 16 (April 1964), 390-406, reprinted in Small and Singer, 1985, pp. 182-95. The first test of their propositions was in Singer and Small (fn. 39, 1968).

[52] Michael D. Wallace, "Alliance Polarization, Cross-Cutting, and International War, 1815-1964," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 17 (December 1973), 575-604, reprinted in Singer and Associates, 1979, pp. 83-111, at 105-07. Charles W. Kegley, Jr., and Gregory A. Raymond, in "Alliance Norms and War: A New Piece in an Old Puzzle," *International Studies Quarterly* 26 (December 1982), 585-89, find that when alliance structures are either extremely flexible or extremely rigid, the magnitude and severity of war are high.

[53] The correlation between an increase in interaction opportunities and the occurrence of war is probably a function of the rise of new actors rather than of a reduction in blocs. Wayman, in "Bipolarity, Multipolarity, and the Threat of War" (fn. 49), 137, makes a similar point against Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 50). The sheer increase in interaction opportunities increases conflict and war—contrary to what Deutsch and Singer expected—because new states often raise fundamental issues that challenge a given order; they must also create a (territorial) place for themselves in the system. For evidence on the latter, see Zeev Maoz, "Joining the Club of Nations: Independence, Revolution, and Conflict in the Interstate System, 1816-1976," paper presented to the World Congress of the International Political Science Association, Paris, July 16, 1986. Evidence that an increase in the number of states is associated with an increase in wars and serious disputes is provided, respectively, in Small and Singer, 1982, pp. 130, 135, 141, and in Charles S. Gochman and Zeev Maoz, "Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816-1976," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 28 (December 1984), 591-94, excerpted in Small and Singer, 1985, pp. 27-36; see 34-35.

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cutting (links across blocs) and the magnitude and severity of war, with moderate cross-cutting reducing the intensity of war, and very low and very high cross-cutting increasing it. This is consistent with the earlier results and is of interest primarily because it means that systems that are very polarized and have no cross-cutting will be subject to wars of high magnitude and severity. The findings on both polarization and cross-cutting are consistent with the findings of Siverson and King that alliances serve to expand wars. Wallace's results also make clear that a polarized alliance structure can give rise to multilateral (complex) wars immediately and not simply expand dyadic wars—a possibility that was not examined by Siverson and King.

Bueno de Mesquita's analysis takes us a step further: he finds that it is not so much the mere existence of polarity that is important, but the change in tightness and, to a lesser extent, the change in interaction opportunities.[54] These relationships, however, are found only in the 20th century. Here, increasing tightness (polarization) is associated with the occurrence of war (probit correlation = .29 for all interstate wars and .47 for wars involving only major powers); decreasing tightness is associated with the absence of war. After periods of declining tightness, war almost never occurs: 89 percent of these periods are followed by peace. Conversely, 84 percent of the wars that do begin in the 20th century follow a rise in systemic tightness, making this an almost necessary condition for war. For the 20th century, Bueno de Mesquita also finds one significant correlation (.33) between the occurrence of war and change (increase) in the number of interaction opportunities.[55] Each of these findings indicates that it is change itself which is a predictor of war, since no relationship is found between the number of poles, discreteness, or tightness and the onset of war. Since the most drastic change in the number of interaction opportunities and systemic tightness comes with the initial making of alliances, one could hypothesize that alliance-making upsets relations between actors and increases the likelihood of war. This is consistent with Ostrom and Hoole's finding that war follows (in a statistically significant sense) within three years of the formation of alliances.[56] At minimum,

[54] Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 50); see 130-32 for the findings reported here.

[55] Since creation of alliances leads to a reduction of interaction opportunities, one would expect a negative correlation between change in interaction opportunities and war. This relationship may not have been uncovered by Bueno de Mesquita because such a reduction would have been wiped out by the rise of new actors, especially in the post-1945 period. It is suggestive, therefore, that he does find a slight (but statistically insignificant −.25) relationship between a reduction of interaction opportunities and the onset of wars involving major powers in the 19th century (see fn. 50, Table 2, p. 130). The positive .33 for the 20th century may be explained away as a function of system size (see fn. 53).

[56] Ostrom and Hoole (fn. 39), 229.

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these findings show that alliances, at least in the 20th century, do not prevent war, but are a way of preparing for war, and in that manner bring states one step closer to war.

The other major effect of a change in polarization is that it encourages each side to make better preparations for war—so that, when a war comes, it is longer. Bueno de Mesquita finds that in the 19th and 20th centuries a change (increase) in the number of poles is associated with longer wars involving major powers (but not related to longer wars in general). He infers that an increase in poles produces uncertainty and encourages nations to be prepared for war. This probably results, in my view, in arms races and attempts to secure commitments from allies, thereby also producing greater tightness and discreteness (i.e., more polarization). Although Bueno de Mesquita does not examine the effects of an increase in poles on changes in tightness and discreteness of blocs, he does find that, in the 20th century, increases in systemic tightness and discreteness do produce longer wars (both interstate wars and wars involving major powers). Since increasing discreteness (few bonds across blocs) means little cross-cutting, this finding is consistent with Wallace's that the absence of cross-cutting is associated with severe wars.[57]

Increasing tightness probably produces longer wars because it reflects each side's ability to get its own house in order by firming up commitments and pooling resources, which means that alliances that work result in longer wars. Since Stephen Rosen has shown that the outcome (and probably the length) of war is a function of the comparative amount of revenue available and the percentage of population loss, allies that can effectively pool resources will have a "larger aggregate of capabilities" to sustain longer wars than they would if they fought dyadically.[58] Also, the pooling of resources permits wealthier allies to sustain weaker allies who do not have the revenues for longer wars.[59]

Finally, Bueno de Mesquita concludes that increasing tightness is a fac-

[57] See Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 50), 134-35, for the idea that an increase in poles encourages nations to prepare for war, and for his findings on discreteness and duration of war. On the importance of cross-cutting (*per se*) for reducing conflict, see Deutsch and Singer (fn. 51); P. Dale Dean and John A. Vasquez, "From Power Politics to Issue Politics," *Western Political Quarterly* 29 (March 1976), 24-27; and Levy (fn. 36), 608.

[58] Steven Rosen, "War Power and the Willingness to Suffer," in Bruce M. Russett (fn. 24), 167-83. Frank W. Wayman, J. David Singer, and Gary Goertz, in "Capabilities, Allocations, and Success in Militarized Disputes and Wars, 1816-1976," *International Studies Quarterly* 27 (December 1983), 506-11, show that the single best capability predictor of an initiator's prospects for winning a war is its industrial capability rather than its military or demographic capability.

[59] Paul Kennedy, in "The First World War and the International Power System," *International Security* 9 (Summer 1984), 7-40, gives a graphic description of how allies prolong wars by providing additional resources, particular economic staying power, at critical junctures.

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tor in making wars spread, since no multilateral (complex) wars occur following a decline in systemic tightness at any time between 1815 and 1965, and nearly 80 percent of the complex wars occur in periods of rising tightness.[60] This is another piece of evidence that alliances are associated with the expansion of war.

Sabrosky uncovers some additional details on the kinds of wars that are likely to enlarge, and the role alliances play in that process.[61] He finds that of the 50 inter-state wars between 1816 and 1965, 40 remained localized. None of the wars that initially involved major powers on each side expanded; they remained dyadic. Major powers that were neutral at the beginning of these wars remained neutral. The probability of other wars expanding was also not very high (only 5 out of 24 wars between a major and a minor power, and 5 out of 22 wars between minor powers, expanded).

However, *if* major-minor wars expanded, it was highly likely that they would be enlarged in such a way that there would be a major power on each side. Of the five major-minor wars that expanded, four were enlarged in this manner; of the five minor-minor wars that expanded, only one was enlarged to include a major power on each side. Although the number of cases is small, the major-minor wars that enlarged were the Crimean War, the War of Italian Unification, World War I, and World War II; this indicates that the main complex wars among major powers began through intervention to help a minor power. Sabrosky is unable to retrodict which wars remained localized; but by analyzing whether there was a high concentration of military capabilities in the major powers, a high level of alliance aggregation in the system, and an increase in both these factors during the preceding five years, he has some success in classifying the wars that expanded and enlarged.

The findings of Wallace, Bueno de Mesquita, and Sabrosky suggest that alliance-making that leads to polarization produces wars of the highest magnitude, severity, and duration—i.e., complex and total wars.[62] The reason for this is not fully explained in the literature, but it seems plausible that in a protracted conflict between equals that becomes a rivalry, the making of an alliance by one side will lead to the making of a counter-alliance as well as a competition for allies. This will polarize the

[60] Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 50), 131-32.

[61] Alan Ned Sabrosky, "Alliance Aggregation, Capability Distribution, and the Expansion of Interstate War," in Sabrosky, 1985, pp. 148, 151, 181.

[62] For an elaboration of these distinctions, see John A. Vasquez, "Capability, Types of War, Peace," *Western Political Quarterly* 38 (June 1986), 313-27, where wars are classified on the basis of three dimensions: capability (wars between equals vs. wars between unequals), the number of participants (dyadic vs. complex), and the goals and means (limited vs. total war).

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system and produce a number of effects which increase the perceived threat and lead to behavior that is more conflictual. First, polarization increases the perceived threat by increasing the power of each side and enlarging the possible theater of war. This leads each side to prepare for a worst-case scenario and to increase its military expenditures. Second, polarization focuses the attention of both sides on the main issues that divide them and reduces the salience of crosscutting issues. This promotes persistent disagreement; makes all minor stakes symbolic of larger ones (thereby collapsing all issues between the main rivals into one overarching issue); and greatly accentuates rivalry and hostility. Third, complete polarization removes the possibility of any major powers' acting as mediators; it also reflects the fact that no one is committed to rules and norms (from the last peace) to resolve disputes, but all are relying on measures of self-help—therefore indicating that violence is a legitimate and perhaps the only effective means for resolving the fundamental issues at hand.[63] Further, the bringing in of allies along with their particular issues makes it more difficult to reach any compromise; it prevents the war from being limited and encourages total war. The reason is that the war becomes an opportunity to resolve all major differences between all major parties. The increase in military expenditures and the competition for allies is also likely to make each side relatively equal; therefore, once it comes, the war is severe, long, and widespread.

One may conclude that the making of alliances has two different effects. First, it leads to a polarization, which is a step to war in that it produces behavior that increases the probability of war. Second, the increasing tightness of blocs indicates that each side is making last-minute preparations for war, which are usually successful, leading wars to be longer and probably of greater magnitude and severity.

Another area in which alliances are seen as having important consequences is the distribution of power, which has traditionally been seen as crucial for preserving peace. Although there has been little research on mapping the actual impact that alliances have on the distribution of power, a great deal of effort has been expended on examining the effect of the distribution of power on war. The thrust of this research, like other work on alliances, suggests that the distribution of power is unrelated to the preservation of peace, but associated with the types of war that are fought.

In the major study on this question, Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey un-

[63] On the relationship between norms justifying violence and the use of force, see Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 170; Maoz (fn. 35), 96, 98-100.

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cover an important anomaly.[64] They find that a balance-of-power system (parity) is associated with less war in the 19th century but with more war in the 20th, while a preponderance of power is associated with more war in the 19th and less war in the 20th. Because the dependent variable in this study is based on nation-months of war rather than on war/no war, the findings are relevant primarily for explaining the magnitude of war rather than its onset. In this sense, the finding does not mean that peace is associated in one century with a balance and in the next with a preponderance of power, as is sometimes implied; instead, preponderance of power is associated with one type of war in the 19th century, and balance of power with another type in the 20th. As I have shown in detail elsewhere, this interpretation best fits the evidence.[65] The wars of the 19th century after 1815 were simply different from the wars of the 20th. In the former, a preponderance of power was associated with the Crimean War and the state-building wars of Germany and Italy and, to a lesser extent, with imperial wars of conquest. All of these wars were limited in magnitude, severity, and duration, compared to the major wars of the 20th century, which were associated with a relative balance of power. This means that, although neither a balance of power nor a preponderance of power will prevent or give rise to a war, *if* a war occurs, the distribution of power will have a major (but probably not the only) influence on the kind of war that is fought. Evidence to support the first part of this conclusion is provided by Bueno de Mesquita: in a re-analysis of the Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey study, he employs war/no war as the dependent variable and finds no relationship between the distribution of capability and the onset of war in either century, thereby eliminating the anomaly.[66]

The finding that the major wars of the 20th century are associated with a relative balance of power is consistent with the hypothesis that, when war occurs between two sides that are relatively equal, war will be severe and long. But it is not clear that such wars need to be widespread and of high magnitude. Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey may have found the latter relationship because they do not attempt to separate the effects of capability from those of coalition-making. In view of the earlier findings on polarization, one might hypothesize that alliances are associated with the

[64] J. David Singer, Stuart A. Bremer, and John Stuckey, "Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War, 1820-1965," in Russett (fn. 24), 19-48; reprinted in Singer, 1979, pp. 265-97, and in Singer and Associates, 1979, 159-88.

[65] Vasquez (fn. 62).

[66] Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, "Risk, Power Distributions, and the Likelihood of War," *International Studies Quarterly* 25 (December 1981), 541-68. Likewise, Wayman et al. (fn. 58), 506, 509 show that, among major powers, the stronger are as likely as the comparatively weaker to initiate wars and disputes; compare Tables 3 and 5.

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expansion and magnitude of war, while equal capability is associated with severity, with duration increasing when an increase in the tightness of blocs just prior to the war makes both sides equal and highly committed to their allies.

Any association between national capability and the severity and duration of a war will be affected by the objectives of the war and the extent to which one or both sides commit their resources; that is, whether participants see themselves as fighting a limited or a total war. Total wars will always be more severe than limited wars; but within this context, one may hypothesize that when two sides are relatively equal in capability, any given (limited *or* total) war will be longer and more severe for both sides than when the sides are not equal.

The fact that severe and long wars did not occur in the 19th century when there was a relative balance of power provides an opportunity for determining why and how such wars were avoided even though the capability for them existed. As we shall see, the reason this type of war did not occur in the 19th century may be that those periods of balance of power coincided with periods in which norms and rules were more widely accepted as constraints than they were in the 20th century. That would also explain why Bueno de Mesquita finds no relationship between change in tightness and war in the 19th century, but does find this relationship in the 20th.[67]

Further and more recent evidence that the structural distribution of capability is associated with the type of war is provided by Jack Levy and by Frank Wayman. Levy's analysis is useful primarily because it extends the purview of inquiry from two centuries to five.[68] His major finding is that periods of bipolar distributions of power are more stable than multipolar periods. Bipolar periods have more frequent wars, but these are less severe and of lower magnitude than the wars of multipolar periods. That is the exact opposite of what had earlier been believed to be the case.

According to Levy, unipolar periods are very unstable; they have the wars of the highest magnitude and duration. Unipolar periods also have most of the general or hegemonic wars that involve the leading powers, while bipolar periods have none of these. Multipolar periods are associated with extremely severe wars. Since war occurs frequently in all periods, none can be credited with producing peace and avoiding war, but unipolar periods are by far the most war-prone.

While these findings are suggestive, the classification of periods as unipolar, bipolar, and multipolar is based on historical judgment rather than

[67] Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 50), Table 4, p. 132.
[68] Levy (fn. 50), esp. 50-59.

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on precise and replicable measures.[69] That is not to say that the classifications are wrong or arbitrary—only that one must proceed cautiously until there is more evidence. In this context, Frank Wayman's study proves to be very interesting.[70]

Wayman's analysis is the most thorough to date employing measures of polarity based on both the distribution of power (power polarity) and the number of blocs (cluster polarity, or polarization). Utilizing a variation of Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey's capabilities index, Wayman examines the percentage of system capabilities of the two most powerful states for each half-decade from 1815 to 1965. With a cut-off point of over 50 percent for bipolarity, he finds (like Levy, but contrary to Rosecrance and Michael Haas)[71] that a bipolar distribution of capability has wars of a lower magnitude (fewer nation-months) than a multipolar distribution of capability, which is associated with the great world wars. Seventy-five percent of the *high*-magnitude wars occur in power multipolarity; 73 percent of the *low*-magnitude wars occur in power bipolarity.

This makes sense in that multiple nations will draw in more participants; and, if they are fairly equal in capability, their pooled resources should make the war not only longer, but more severe. In this sense, one could expect the most disastrous wars to occur when a multipolar distribution of power produces a fairly equal distribution of capability between two polarized blocs. We know from the Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey study that relative equality of capability in the 20th century is associated with severe wars of great magnitude. Now Wayman shows that in the 20th century, alliance patterns prior to wars were also becoming more (bi)polarized; he thereby adds an important piece to help solve this puzzle. He finds that an increase in polarization among major powers in the 20th century is associated with an increase in the subsequent magnitude of war ($r = -.48$ between many blocs and nation-months of war). This is compatible with and extends Bueno de Mesquita's finding that increasing systemic tightness in the 20th century is associated with the duration of war.[72]

[69] For example, Wayman measures shifts in polarity within the 19th and 20th centuries, while Levy codes the entire 1815-1945 period as multipolar. Compare Levy (fn. 50), Table 4.1, p. 49, with Wayman (fn. 49, 1985), Table 7.2, p. 127. Nevertheless, Levy can make a plausible argument that the 1815-1945 period is relatively multipolar when compared to other periods between 1495 and 1975. Levy's classification of unipolar periods is more controversial; Michael Wallace, in the same volume, takes sharp exception to it. See Wallace, "Polarization," in Sabrosky, 1985, pp. 108-9.

[70] See Wayman (fn. 49, 1985), at 126-27, 131-33 for the findings discussed below.

[71] Richard Rosecrance, "Bipolarity, Multipolarity and the Future," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 10 (September 1966), 317-27; Michael Haas, "International Subsystems: Stability and Polarity," *American Political Science Review* 64 (March 1970), 98-123.

[72] Wayman (fn. 49, 1985), 133-35; Bueno de Mesquita (fn. 50), 135.

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A close inspection of Wayman's data shows how this occurs. He measures cluster polarity by the ratio of actual poles to potential poles among major powers; his scale ranges from 1.00 for no blocs or complete depolarization and the absence of major power alliances to scores that would approach 0.00 when there is cluster bipolarity or complete polarization. Beginning in 1870 (which has no blocs; score of 1.00), the system gradually develops more alliances until it is polarized at .50 in 1905, where it remains until the end of World War I. The system then experiences a rapid disintegration of blocs (score of .80 for 1920, 1.00 from 1925 to 1935); they build up again just before the war (with a score of .86 in 1938) and disintegrate at the end of the war (score of 1.00). Although there is a movement toward polarization just before World War I and World War II (as well as the Korean War), the score of .86 for 1938 is too high.[73]

In part, this score reflects Hitler's initial success in neutralizing the Soviet Union and then avoiding war with the United States. This success fell apart in 1941, when Hitler and Japan polarized the system by attacking the U.S.S.R. and the U.S., respectively. These two expansions of the war account for much of its magnitude, severity, and duration. By examining the alliance structure between 1939 and 1942, then, the evidence becomes more consistent with that for World War I.

In terms of the previous analyses we can now hypothesize as follows: an increase in polarization as measured by tightness is associated with an increase in the duration of wars (Bueno de Mesquita); and a multipolar distribution of power is associated with wars of greater magnitude (Wayman). If that distribution is polarized into two blocs, as was the case in World Wars I and II (Wayman), and there is a relative equality of power between the belligerents (Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey), the war will also be severe. All other factors being equal, we can conclude that increasing polarization of blocs makes for longer wars, multipolar distribution of power makes for wars of a greater magnitude, and equal capability between blocs increases the severity of wars. Because alliance-making can affect each of these variables, it has the peculiar consequence of bringing all of these factors together in their most disastrous and explosive combination, so that a war that occurs in this context is most likely to become a general war, eventually encompassing all leading states. We know from Sabrosky that the situation that is most likely to trigger such a general war is a war between a major power and a minor power, in which another major power intervenes to come to the aid of the minor power.[74]

[73] Wayman (fn. 49, 1985), 129.

[74] Sabrosky (fn. 61), 181. Further evidence of the importance of minor powers in the occur-

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Differences between the 19th and the 20th Century: Alliances and Arms Races

One reason why Correlates of War findings differ for the 19th and 20th centuries is that in the 19th century after 1815, there are no general wars. It may be that these general wars are absent in the so-called 100 years of peace (1815-1913) because alliance-making did not produce the explosive mixture of polarization of blocs, multipolar distribution of power, and equal distribution of power between blocs. This absence may help to explain why the 19th-century wars between major powers—the Crimean, Seven Weeks', and Franco-Prussian wars—were comparatively limited. In addition, general wars may have been avoided because 19th-century alliances, unlike those of the 20th century, did not fuel arms races. Michael Wallace, trying to account for his previous research, which found a strong relationship between polarization and the magnitude and severity of war in the 20th century but only a weak relationship in the 19th, notes that after 1903, major power alliances that were aimed at another major power always produced a sharp increase in the rate of growth of the target's military expenditures. Prior to 1903, this effect did not occur;[75] Wallace speculates that, in the 20th century, alliances were formed to build winning coalitions, whereas in the 19th century they were equilibrium mechanisms in the classic balance-of-power fashion.[76]

The kinds of alliances that are formed will make a big difference in whether wars will be limited or become general wars. For research to progress, there is a need to create more theoretical typologies of alliances.

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rence of world wars is provided by Manus Midlarsky, who is outside the project. He finds that such systemic wars occur when serious disputes in the system begin to accumulate and are no longer stable (i.e., they are no longer randomly distributed in the sense that there is a balance in the number of disputes that are begun and ended in a given period). He finds that if only the disputes between major powers are examined, the periods prior to the two World Wars, 1893-1914 and 1919-1939, are stable. However, if the disputes involving "mid-range powers" (like Serbia, Rumania, or Belgium) are included, the system becomes very unstable. Midlarsky, "Preventing Systemic War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 28 (December 1984), 563-84, and "A Hierarchical Equilibrium Theory of Systemic War," *International Studies Quarterly* 30 (March 1986), 77-105.

[75] Wallace, "Polarization," in Sabrosky, 1985, pp. 110-11. Also see Singer and Small, "Foreign Policy Indicators," in Singer, 1979, pp. 322-23, for evidence of the different effects of alliances in the two centuries.

[76] In my view, it is not the balance-of-power aspect that is the significant difference: in the 19th century, alliances more frequently aimed to prevent war by coming to an understanding about how to deal with major issues; failing that, they aimed to keep any war that did occur limited. Bismarck was particularly adept at using alliances in this manner. After his departure, the approach of Kaiser Wilhelm II made alliances more threatening and therefore more likely to give rise to counter-alliances and arms races. The notion that a balance of power in and of itself can prevent war appears to be incorrect; see Levy (fn. 36), 608, esp. n. 19, and Vasquez (fn. 62). On the differences in alliances in different centuries, see Levy (fn. 36), 604-07.

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Despite the variety of purposes served by alliances in different historical contexts, the critical distinction in terms of a comparative analysis of the causes of war seems to be whether an alliance was aimed at forming a winning coalition.

The immediate effect of alliances that seek to form a winning coalition is to intensify military expenditures and to embroil actors in arms races. It is through the creation of these arms races that alliances are linked to the onset of war. Direct evidence to support this argument comes from an early path analysis of Wallace's in which he finds that alliance aggregation in the system leads to arms expenditures, but not the reverse: arms expenditures do not lead to alliances.[77] He maintains that major power alliances after 1903 *always* led those who were targeted by the alliance to increase the rate of growth of their armed forces; in turn, this *always* produced a counter-response which led to an arms race.[78] This suggests that alliances that do not produce arms races will not lead to war, explaining why Levy and Wayman find that, while many alliances are associated with war, not *all* are, and especially not those in the 19th century. Wallace's research also suggests part of what might be going on during the typical three-year (or so) time lag between the formation of alliances and the onset of war.

This raises the question why some alliances do not lead to arms races. The answer may lie with the level of hostility between rivals preceding and following the formation of an alliance. Alliances that attempt to build a winning coalition are born in a hostile environment and pose a new threat that increases the level of hostility and the sense of insecurity. Alliances that do not seek a winning coalition pose less of a threat, and thus do not add to existing hostility. Alliances and arms races may thus be critical intervening variables that increase the level of hostility until it is sufficient to generate the kinds of disputes that escalate to war. On the basis of this analysis, we can hypothesize that hostility is produced by dramatic changes in relations between actors, and that the presence of hostility produces a step-level effect in subsequent behavior, making states more sensitive to negative acts and leading them to discount positive ones.[79] If this hypothesis were confirmed, it would identify the operating force that gets actors from one step to war to the next: it shows that the taking of one

[77] Wallace (fn. 24), 64.

[78] Wallace, "Polarization," in Sabrosky, 1985, pp. 110-11.

[79] Testing a complex interaction model originally offered by Richard W. Mansbach and John A. Vasquez, *In Search of Theory: A New Paradigm for Global Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), chap. 7, Wayman finds considerable support for this hypothesis explaining up to 88% of the variance; see Frank Whelon Wayman, "Voices Prophesying War: Events and Perceptions as Indicators of Conflict Potential in the Middle East," in Singer and Stoll, 1984, pp. 180-82.

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step, instead of reducing threat, leads to a permanent increase in hostility, which leads to the taking of more threatening steps by the other side, which in turn are matched by the first. Such a hypothesis helps to explain how alliances lead to arms races and underlines the fact that alliances, like most practices associated with war, are important as part of a dynamic reciprocal process.

Responding to Security Issues: Arms Races

Most of the threads of an explanation of why arms races begin have long been part of the literature.[80] There is a consensus that arms races presuppose rivalry, at least at some level, and intensify that rivalry once they are under way. In terms of the steps outlined here, the key motivation for arms races is the insecurity resulting from perceived threat and hostility. This general insecurity, which is awakened whenever a situation occurs that might portend force, becomes a specific fear whenever a rival state is perceived as having a larger military capacity, as building arms, or as increasing its capability by making an alliance.[81]

While such factors may lead decision makers to seek a military build-up, decision makers are unlikely to get domestic support without some concrete manifestation of the threat posed by the rival. This usually comes in the form of an international crisis, although the formation of an alliance itself can so alarm leaders that it may be seen (by them and the public) as a crisis. One can hypothesize that the greater the number of crises between two rivals, the harder it is to avoid an arms race.

In order to generate the necessary domestic mobilization for arms races, such as increased taxes, a shift in resources and spending, and the adoption of some form of conscription, leaders often exaggerate the external threat.[82] In turn, this increases the fear in the other side, extends the influence of hard-liners in both camps, and helps to produce an arms-race spiral.[83]

[80] Lewis Fry Richardson, *Arms and Insecurity* (Pittsburgh: Boxwood Press, 1960); J. David Singer, "Threat-Perception and the Armament-Tension Dilemma," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 2 (March 1958), 90-105, and Singer, "The Outcome of Arms Races: A Policy Problem and a Research Approach," *Proceedings of the International Peace Research Association* 2 (1970), 137-46, both reprinted in Singer, 1979, pp. 27-47, 145-54, respectively; also see Singer, 1984, chap. 7.

[81] See Singer, "Threat Perception" (fn. 80), 33-34.

[82] Singer, "Escalation and Control in International Conflict: A Simple Feedback Model," *General Systems Yearbook* 15 (1970), 163-73, reprinted in Singer, 1979, p. 73. Also see Singer, "Threat Perception" (fn. 80), 36-37; Theodore J. Lowi, "Making Democracy Safe for the World," in James Rosenau, ed., *Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy* (New York: Free Press, 1967), 320-23; Wayman et al. (fn. 58), 498.

[83] For Singer's views on the role of the military and other bureaucratic and domestic groups in sustaining arms races, see his "Escalation and Control," in Singer, 1979, pp. 77-78; "Out-

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In such an atmosphere, war is likely but not inevitable. The trigger that is needed to explode the various elements that have been put in place is an international crisis, and the mere presence of an ongoing arms race makes it more probable that such a crisis is the kind that will escalate to war. The first systematic evidence that arms races are, in themselves, a major factor in the onset of war was published in 1979 by Michael Wallace.[84] He examines 99 serious disputes between 1816 and 1965, which he divides into those that escalated to war and those that did not. He then asks whether the presence of an ongoing arms race is what distinguishes the relatively few serious disputes that escalate from the many that do not. Of the 28 serious disputes that occurred in the presence of an ongoing arms race, 23 escalated to war; of the 71 serious disputes that occurred where there was no arms race, only 3 escalated to war. This is impressive evidence that arms races are a crucial factor in determining whether serious disputes will escalate to war; it is confirmed by Yule's *Q* of .96.[85]

A challenge to these findings comes from the "peace-through-strength" counter-hypothesis, which maintains that it is not the *presence*

come of Arms Races" (fn. 80), 151-52; Singer, 1984, pp. 259-60; and Singer, "The Responsibilities of Competence in the Global Village" (presidential address to International Studies Association), *International Studies Quarterly* 29 (September, 1985), 247-48, 254, 257-59.

[84] Wallace (fn. 26), in Singer and Associates, 1979, esp. 251-52.

[85] Erich Weede, in "Arms Races and Escalation: Some Persisting Doubts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 24 (June 1980), 285-87, has criticized Wallace for treating *each* arms race and serious dispute as a dyadic case rather than counting all disputes and wars involving the same set of participants as a single case, regardless of the number of dyads. This is particularly important for World War I and World War II, both of which Wallace treats as several discrete cases. Wallace has re-analyzed the data and eliminated all cases in which two or more allies simultaneously entered the war against a common foe, thereby reducing the 28 cases of serious disputes having arms races to 15. Nevertheless, the relationship still holds; 11 of the 15 serious disputes escalate to war while only 4 do not. Conversely, only 2 of the 65 serious disputes escalate when there is no ongoing arms race. See Michael D. Wallace, "Armaments and Escalation," *International Studies Quarterly* 26 (March 1982), 37-56, at 46.

Paul F. Diehl, in "Arms Races and Escalation: A Closer Look," *Journal of Peace Research* 20 (No. 3, 1983), 205-12, manages to eliminate most of the relationship Wallace establishes; but to do so, he must remove 17 cases from the sample. Ten cases are eliminated because they are connected with ongoing wars and 7 more are deleted because they are connected with the First and Second World Wars (p. 210). In addition, some new cases are added and changes are made in the arms-race index. These manipulations are too extensive to support a conclusion that arms races are unrelated to the escalation of serious disputes. Diehl's main contribution is to suggest that much of Wallace's finding depends on the presence of ongoing wars and on World War I and World War II. (On the latter, see Henk W. Houweling and Jan Siccama, "The Arms Race–War Relationship: Why Serious Disputes Matter," *Arms Control* 2, September 1981, p. 161, n. 13.) This suggests that, while arms races may escalate disputes between rivals (relative equals), they may not be a factor in other types of wars. This hypothesis would also help to account for Diehl's finding (p. 209) that 77% of the wars that occur are not preceded by an arms race, since many of these wars are wars between unequals. Finally, the connection between arms races, escalation of disputes, and ongoing wars may provide a clue about how wars spread to become world wars. The presence of a series of disputes that might escalate to war may encourage others to arm because of the threatening environment, and thereby encourage war, when it comes, to enlarge.

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of arms race but who *is winning* the arms race that is the key factor. If this logic were coupled with Organski's distinction between satisfied and dissatisfied states (or revisionist and status quo actors),[86] then it could be expected that serious disputes would be likely to escalate to war only if revisionist states were winning the arms race. Wallace examines this claim by comparing the relative adequacy of this "peace-through-strength" approach with his own and Singer's "armament-tension spiral" approach; he produces several interesting results.[87]

In a number of tests, Wallace finds no statistically significant relationship (and hardly any strength of association) between whether arms races favor (or are won by) revisionist actors and whether serious disputes escalate. It can be concluded that spending more on arms than one's rival is not related to the escalation of serious disputes—which means that strength of arms neither prevents war nor leads to war. Wallace goes on to demonstrate that the peace-through-strength hypothesis has nowhere near the accuracy of the armament-tension spiral hypothesis by showing that, whether a revisionist state is "superior" or "weaker," arms races still lead to escalation. Of the 10 serious disputes that occur when there is an ongoing arms race while the revisionist state is "superior," 8 escalate and 2 do not. Conversely, of the 18 disputes that occur when there is *no* arms race and the revisionist state is "superior," only one dispute escalates, and 17 do not. The cases involving "weaker" revisionist states exhibit the same pattern. In the 18 disputes that occur when there is an ongoing arms race while the revisionist state is "weaker," 15 escalate to war and only three do not. Conversely, of the 53 disputes that occur when there is *no* arms race and the revisionist state is "weaker," only 2 escalate, and 51 do not. In light of such consistent findings, it must be concluded that arms races or military build-ups do in fact, by their mere presence, make it more likely that a serious dispute will escalate to war.[88]

[86] A.F.K. Organski, *World Politics* (New York: Knopf, 1958), 325-33.

[87] See Wallace, "Armaments and Escalation" (fn. 85), at 42-45, 47-51, for the findings reported here.

[88] Also relevant to evaluating the peace-through-strength argument are two studies by Stuart Bremer which show that stronger nations tend to be involved in wars more often; see his "The Trials of Nations: An Improbable Application of Probability Theory" and "National Capabilities and War Proneness," both in Singer 1980, pp. 3-35 and 57-82. In a related study, Wolf-Dieter Eberwein finds that the more powerful a nation, the more likely it is to initiate or join a(n ongoing) serious dispute; see "The Seduction of Power: Serious International Disputes and the Power of Nations, 1900-1976," *International Interactions* 9 (No. 1, 1982), 57-74.

Paul Diehl (fn. 24), 343, also finds the peace-through-strength hypothesis deficient. Although Diehl questions the importance of arms races, *per se*, in the escalation of disputes, he does show that both arms races and military build-ups can be critical *indirect* factors in the escalation of disputes between states that have become rivals (i.e., have already experienced two disputes). His reservations about Wallace's finding on arms races, however, stem prima-

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These findings imply that, in the absence of serious disputes, war can still be avoided during an arms race. Although this inference is plausible, there has been no test of whether this factor distinguishes arms races that lead to war from those that do not.[89] It is more difficult to discern whether arms races encourage actors to become involved in the kinds of serious disputes that are apt to escalate. The mere *presence* of arms races may not be what leads disputes to escalate; it may just be that arms races introduce greater insecurity and hostility in political relationships and therefore make it likely that actors will become involved in the *kinds* of serious disputes that are likely to escalate. The research on crisis escalation has identified a number of characteristics besides arms racing which distinguish serious disputes that escalate to war from those that do not.

Crisis Escalation

While arms races could be regarded as a critical background factor, most of the other characteristics related to crisis escalation are internal to the crisis itself. One set of factors that has received a great deal of attention consists of the bargaining tactics and strategy employed by the participants, especially the initiators. Another set is the perceptual response of leaders to the tactics employed, especially the effect of these perceptions on hostility. A third set consists of the personal characteristics of leaders and the domestic political context in which they operate. Finally, the characteristics of the issues at stake in the dispute and the overall foreign policy of the actor that provoked the crisis in the first place must be considered.

Within the Correlates of War project, the work of Russell Leng has been devoted to analyzing the role of bargaining in the escalation of serious disputes. In a series of studies, which usually employ a small random or representative sample, he has uncovered a number of suggestive

rily from the fact that he has removed a number of cases associated with the two World Wars and has included 42 (out of 104) cases involving rivalries where at least one party has nuclear capacity (Table 1, p. 335). Among the latter are a large number of cases that have not resulted in the escalation of disputes to war; this should not be interpreted as undercutting Wallace's finding, which is primarily a product of the prenuclear era. On the whole, the Correlates of War project has not treated the post-1945 period in a way that permits an assessment of the impact of nuclear weapons; for an initial attempt by someone outside the project, see Michael Altgeld, "Nuclear Weapons and War–Choice Decisions," in Sabrosky, 1985, pp. 191-207.

[89] See Singer, "The Outcome of Arms Races" (fn. 80), esp. 147, 153. What is known is that many wars grow out of serious disputes and that it is difficult to avoid war when there is a pattern of repeated military confrontations. Peter Wallensteen, in "Incompatibility, Confrontation, and War: Four Models and Three Historical Systems, 1816-1976," *Journal of Peace Research*, 18 (No. 1, 1981), 74-75, 84, a study of major power pairs, found that 75% (12 of 16) of the pairs of nations that had repeated confrontations also experienced war. See also Houweling and Siccama (fn. 85), 157-97.

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findings. At the most basic level, Leng, with Hugh Wheeler, found that a bullying strategy is usually associated with disputes escalating to war, and that a reciprocating strategy provides the best overall outcome while avoiding war.[90] More significantly, in a later study on realpolitik tactics he finds that threats—especially negative inducements that are highly credible—are apt to produce extreme responses, either outright compliance or defiance (in terms of counterthreats or punishments). Defiant responses, however, are most likely to occur when the disputants are relatively equal in capability. There is also some indirect evidence that defiant responses are associated with war. These results suggest that, while decision makers may behave in crises in ways that conform to the description of realists like Morgenthau and conflict strategists like Schelling, this behavior often leads (among equals) to war, rather than to diplomatic success.[91]

Apparently, the key to understanding how realpolitik tactics lead to the escalation of disputes lies in the way in which leaders change their behavior toward a rival from one dispute to the next. In a review of six pairs of evenly matched states that were involved in three successive disputes, Leng uncovers a definite learning pattern. He finds that the loser of the previous dispute attributes the loss to a failure to demonstrate sufficient resolve (i.e., commitment to force), and is likely to initiate the second dispute. As a result, both participants tend to escalate the level of coercion in each successive crisis (a finding that holds true for 17 of 24 cases), with war becoming increasingly likely by the third dispute, if it has not occurred earlier. This suggests that, as the underlying issue fails to be resolved, bargaining techniques in successive disputes will become more coercive and more likely to escalate.[92]

Charles Gochman and Russell Leng[93] find that disputes between equals that pose a physical threat to vital issues are more apt to escalate than disputes involving other issues or triggered by other events.[94] They

[90] Russel J. Leng and Hugh B. Wheeler, "Influence Strategies, Success and War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 23 (December 1979), 655-84. See also Russell J. Leng with Robert A. Goodsell, "Behavioral Indicators of War Proneness in Bilateral Conflicts," in Patrick J. McGowan, ed., *Sage International Yearbook of Foreign Policy Studies* 2 (1974), 191-226, reprinted in Singer and Associates, 1979, pp. 208-39.

[91] Leng, in Singer, 1980, pp. 143-56. For an attempt to create a model that predicts which disputes will escalate on the basis of interstate interactions, see Zeev Maoz, "A Behavioral Model of Dispute Escalation: The Major Powers, 1816-1976," *International Interactions* 10 (Nos. 3-4, 1984), 373-99.

[92] Leng, "When Will They Ever Learn?" (fn. 25), esp. 398-99, 412-15; Leng, "Reagan and the Russians: Crisis Bargaining Beliefs and the Historical Record," *American Political Science Review* 78 (September 1984), 338-55, reprinted in Small and Singer 1985, pp. 207-29.

[93] Gochman and Leng (fn. 27).

[94] The hypothesis that crises initiated by physical threats escalate to war is also supported

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define vital issues as involving questions of political independence or control of one's own or contiguous territory.[95] It might be hypothesized that because such issues are difficult to resolve, actors employ increasingly coercive tactics to get the other side to give in. Among equals, these tactics meet with defiant responses and lead to successive crises. By the third crisis, if not before, all the characteristics associated with escalation (initiation by physical threat, vital issues, previous learning, and more coercive tactics) are in place, and war breaks out. In addition, the presence of arms races probably increases the likelihood that disputes with these explosive characteristics will emerge.

It is encouraging to note that Leng's findings are compatible with the earlier findings of Richard Barringer, who is outside the project.[96] Barringer employs a cluster analysis of 300 characteristics of 18 disputes. He finds that one of the main distinctions between non-military and military disputes is the way the issues at stake are perceived. Barringer also suggests that domestic mobilization is associated with the militarization of disputes. He finds that both sides tend to equalize their military manpower just prior to the war, whereas they had earlier been unequal.[97] Often any shift in the military balance is seized upon to gain an immediate advantage. Attitudes among the public of each side are more supportive of hostilities, and ideological differences which had been previously mild are now extreme. Finally, Barringer finds that military hostilities tend to erupt after a crisis and a change in the leadership of one side.

Barringer's analysis suggests that, to get a sense of why leaders take the actions they do, a complete understanding of escalation must go beyond the bargaining factors that arise within a crisis and examine the nature of the leadership (and the domestic political context within which it oper-

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by Patrick James and Jonathan Wilkenfeld, "Structural Factors and International Crisis Behavior," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 7 (Spring 1984), 33-53, employing an independent data base.

[95] It is probably the territorial aspect of issues that is particularly explosive. See Most and Starr (fn. 46); Singer, "Confrontational Behavior and Escalation to War, 1816-1980: A Research Plan," *Journal of Peace Research* 19 (No. 1, 1982), 40; and Paul F. Diehl, "Contiguity and Military Escalation in Major Power Rivalries, 1816-1980," *Journal of Politics* 47 (No. 4, 1985), 1203-11. However, it seems that issues that involve several parties are also explosive, since an intervention by a third party into an ongoing dyadic dispute will increase the likelihood of escalation to war. See Thomas Cusack and Wolf-Dieter Eberwein, "Prelude to War: Incidence, Escalation and Intervention in International Disputes, 1900-1976," *International Interactions* 9 (No. 1 1982), 9-28.

[96] Barringer, *War: Patterns of Conflict* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1972); see pp. 102-12 for the findings reported here.

[97] Singer (fn. 95), 40, hypothesizes that the more equal the protagonists are militarily, the more likely an escalation to war.

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ates).[98] Singer recognized long ago that there is an interaction between the international and domestic political contexts that encourages leaders to take escalatory actions and makes it difficult to initiate conciliatory moves within a dispute. Domestically, in the attempt to mobilize the public and gain support for military expenditures, leaders paint a picture of a hostile enemy and create a climate that is responsive to hard-line and jingoistic appeals. This tendency is reinforced by traditional realist notions that one must show firmness (and resolve) in the struggle for power. Both domestic and global factors interact to produce self-aggravating propensities that increase hostility and make compromise more difficult.[99]

Such factors affect decision makers' perceptions, encouraging both sides to develop not only mirror-images, but a shared intellectual context that sees power politics as a legitimate and useful means for dealing with the adversary.[100] In this climate it is not surprising that perceived hostility is correlated with violent behavior, and that crisis interactions generate a hostile interaction spiral in which each side overreacts to the other while thinking its own policy is less hostile than that of the other.[101] The development of a hostile spiral is the final step to war. If the spiraling effect can be avoided through diplomatic skill and bold leadership, the crisis can be successfully managed and war averted.[102] This is difficult, however, because of the weight of all the previous decisions (steps) that have been taken and have brought the parties to where they now stand.

This suggests that, while the decisions taken in crises are crucial, they are not the fundamental causes of war. Psychological stress, selective inattention, and poor decision making may make it hard to avoid war at the last minute; but, even if a particular crisis is successfully managed, another will inevitably come along (and will be more intense and more difficult to manage) if there is no fundamental change in policy (goals and means). It is not the dynamics of decision making that produce war, but a set of foreign policy goals and a sequence of practices which create a political relationship and an atmosphere that is apt to result in war given the right set of triggers.

[98] Little quantitative work has been conducted on the effect of the domestic political context, and especially the role of hard-liners, on the decision of leaders to go to war or use force. For a set of hypotheses that seek to identify general patterns, see Vasquez (fn. 30).

[99] Singer, "Escalation and Control" (fn. 82), 72-78, and Singer (fn. 95), 40.

[100] Vasquez (fn. 30).

[101] Holsti et al. (fn. 29), 146, 148, 152-57.

[102] For an attempt to model different hostile spirals so as to distinguish those that will escalate to war from those that will not, see Dina A. Zinnes and Robert G. Muncaster, "The Dynamics of Hostile Activity and the Prediction of War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 28 (June 1984), 187-229.

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Conclusion: Conditions of Peace

Although much of the research supports realist descriptions of what actors are likely to do when faced with threats, the adoption of common realist practices, such as alliance-making, military build-ups, balancing of power, and realpolitik tactics do not produce peace, but lead to war.[103] Elsewhere, I have argued that power politics is not so much an explanation of behavior as it is a type of behavior found in the global political system that must itself be explained.[104] A more comprehensive nonrealist analysis would explain when decision makers exhibit power-politics behavior and when they do not, and how a system that is dominated by power-politics images and behavior could be transformed into one that is not. Only the hints of a broader nonrealist analysis that draws on the insight of social psychology are present in the work of the Correlates of War project, and these are mainly, though not exclusively, in the more policy-oriented analyses of Singer.[105]

Throughout Singer's work one finds a steadfast commitment to develop a scientific analysis of war that is motivated by a normative concern for building a more peaceful world. This concern is reflected not only in his policy essays, but also in his efforts to encourage other scholars to develop policy-relevant, quantitative indicators that can be used to improve understanding and to provide warnings of harmful trends.[106] Eschewing conspiratorial or highly rational explanations of elite behavior, Singer has long maintained that most foreign policy decisions are made in ignorance, and that even modest improvements in the scientific cumulation of knowledge can be policy-relevant.[107]

The idea that the correlates of war can be explained as a series of steps certainly fulfills this expectation and belies the early criticism that quantitative analysis could succeed in discovering only the obvious and the trivial. Although the steps to war must be seen as a working outline of a scientific explanation of war that needs to be further tested, refined, and

[103] Singer would probably find this statement too strong; but see his "Confrontational Behavior" (fn. 95), 42-43. It should also be kept in mind that this statement does not mean that those who have advocated such realist practices are necessarily in favor of war. No one familiar with the political life of Hans Morgenthau or Reinhold Niebuhr would make such an assertion.

[104] Vasquez (fn. 12, 1983), 215-23.

[105] See in particular the essays reprinted in Singer, 1979, chaps. 2, 4, 6, 7, 15, and Singer, 1984, epilogue (also reprinted as "Nuclear Strategies and Peace," in Small and Singer, 1985, pp. 377-92).

[106] See Singer, 1984, p. 299, and his two edited books on quantitative indicators: Singer and Wallace, 1979, and Singer and Stoll, 1984.

[107] See Singer, 1979, pp. 131-32; Singer, *The Scientific Study of Politics: An Approach to Foreign Policy Analysis* (Morristown, NJ: General Learning Corporation, 1972), excerpted in Singer, 1979, pp. 133-44, see esp. 136-37, 143; Singer and Small, "Foreign Policy Indicators," in Singer, 1979, 328-29.

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fitted to specific historical cases, its propositions provide the kind of precision and nonobvious findings that make scholarly work policy-relevant. The findings of the Correlates of War project suggest that the implementation of common realist practices against equals produces neither peace nor victory (as realists imply by their prescriptions), but increased insecurity, coercion, and entanglement in a process that may lead to war. Each step leads decision makers further and further into a trap (both globally and domestically) where they have little choice but to fight. The relevancy of delineating these steps is that it highlights what must be done to avoid the next step, and warns leaders of the negative and unanticipated consequences of taking the steps. Although a discussion of the policy implications of each step would take a separate paper of its own, suffice it to say that, in the early 20th century, decision makers did not understand, nor really anticipate, how alliance formation could lead to world war. The findings suggest that alliances formed in response to threats can lead to polarization. If complete enough, and in a world where power is equally distributed around more than two poles, such polarization can produce world wars. If the initial step had not been taken, the issues might have been resolved dyadically through limited war.

In this way the findings suggest how war might be mitigated and controlled. Can it ever be avoided, or is humankind condemned, as realists would have us believe, to a history of war and a struggle for power? Although the project has not been directly concerned with the correlates of *peace*, there are some interesting findings that suggest that the frequency of war varies in different periods and systems; there are cases where actors do not always exhibit the kind of power-politics behavior involved in the steps to war.

Peter Wallensteen marshals evidence to show that when major powers make concerted efforts to work out a set of rules to guide their relations (what he calls "universalist policies"), no wars among major powers are fought, military confrontations are drastically reduced, and even wars and confrontations between major and minor powers are somewhat attenuated.[108] Conversely, when major powers do not (or are unable to) make an effort to create an order based on acceptable rules, but fall back on "particularist policies" based on unilateral actions, wars break out among them, and confrontations increase two-fold. A full understanding of the conditions of peace requires discovering the factors that encourage states (and other political actors) to create rules.

In a series of articles, Charles Kegley and Gregory Raymond have provided evidence that when states accept norms, the incidence of war is re-

[108] Wallensteen (fn. 33), especially Table 2, p. 246.

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duced. They find that, when global cultural norms consider alliance commitments binding and regard the unilateral abrogation of commitments and treaties as illegitimate, then war (particularly in the major power system) is less frequent and of less severity, magnitude, and intensity.[109] A similar relationship is found when all serious disputes are examined.[110] While alliance norms may be important, it is unlikely that, in and of themselves, they would have such an impact on the onset of war; rather, the presence of such norms is an indicator of a much broader consensus (on rules of the game) that prevents unilateral actions.[111]

Since war and force can be regarded as a way of making political decisions under conditions of anarchy, the creation of a system of rules by which to make political decisions can serve as the functional equivalent of war. It does this when rules provide for an allocation mechanism[112] other than force for resolving issues, and actors accept the outcomes of using those mechanisms, even if it means they will lose a particular contest. This acceptance, in turn, is probably a function of their ability to avoid raising fundamental issues that are questions of life and death.

If we assume that war avoidance at the domestic, regional, or global level involves the creation of a political system or regime capable of making decisions, then how long the peaces that end major wars will last depends upon their success in creating an order that institutionalizes procedures for the resolution of political demands. How successful a peace will be depends on its ability to set the agenda so that certain issues are avoided, and to assimilate new and/or recovered major powers[113] so that they do not take actions outside the system.[114]

[109] Specifically, they find that war occurs in every half-decade (from 1820-1914) among great powers when commitments are not considered binding (*clausa rebus sic stantibus*) in the international legal culture, but only in 50% of the half-decades when they are considered binding (*pacta sunt servanda*). See Kegley and Raymond (fn. 52), 586.

[110] Charles W. Kegley, Jr., and Gregory A. Raymond, "Alliance Norms and the Management of Interstate Disputes," in Singer and Stoll, 1984, 199-220.

[111] Because serious disputes (including wars) also decrease when there is a moderate degree of alliance flexibility (as opposed to rigid, polarized, or extremely fluid alliance structure), these findings (fn. 110, esp. p. 210) can also be explained by a deterrence logic. The deterrence explanation seems less compelling than the one offered here because the explanation that the creation of a consensus on the rules of the game is an independent factor producing peace is consistent not only with the evidence presented by Kegley and Raymond, but also with the other evidence presented in this section. In addition, Kegley and Raymond, in "Normative Constraints on the Use of Force Short of War," *Journal of Peace Research* 23 (No. 3, 1986), 213-27, esp. pp. 217-24, use the notion of rules to account in detail for actual historical practices.

[112] An allocation mechanism is a set of rules and procedures, no matter how informal, for making and implementing political decisions, thereby providing a way for the disposition of stakes. See Mansbach and Vasquez (fn. 79), 282-87.

[113] Charles F. Doran, *The Politics of Assimilation* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971).

[114] A stable peace also reduces the number of major-minor wars and confrontations (see Wallensteen, fn. 33, p. 246); but such a peace does not imply justice, since it may be used by

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Such an explanation will need to be more fully elaborated and tested; it is consistent, however, with the early finding by Singer and Wallace that war produces an increase in the number of intergovernmental organizations.[115] It is also consistent with Wallace's intriguing finding that the absence of status inconsistency in the system is associated with formation of (and presumably the effectiveness of) intergovernmental organizations. Formation of intergovernmental organizations, in turn, is negatively associated with arms build-ups (which have a strong correlation with the onset of war).[116] All this suggests not only that power-politics behavior has been avoided at certain times of global history, but also that, when actors have taken a more Grotian approach, they have succeeded in avoiding war among themselves.

Through the careful collection of scientific data and the systematic analysis of wars since 1815, the Correlates of War project has provided a body of findings that are beginning to cumulate into a number of insights. These suggest what factors are, and are not, associated with war, what factors are associated with the severity, magnitude, and duration of war, and what actions may have produced past periods of peace. Much remains to be done, but it is heartening, as Singer states, that after literally centuries of inconclusive theorizing and philosophizing on the causes of war, real progress in our knowledge is beginning to be made.[117]

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major states to divide or control minor states or other territories, as was done in the 19th century.

[115] J. David Singer and Michael D. Wallace, "Intergovernmental Organization and the Preservation of Peace, 1816-1965: Some Bivariate Relationships, *International Organization* 24 (Summer 1970), 520-47.

[116] Wallace (fn. 24), 65-66. Kjell Skjelsbaek's finding, in "Shared Membership in Intergovernmental Organizations and Dyadic War, 1865-1964," in Edward H. Fedder, ed., *The United Nations: Problems and Prospects* (St. Louis: Center for International Studies, University of Missouri, 1971), 31-61, that shared membership in intergovernmental organizations decreases prior to the outbreak of war is consistent with Wallace's findings. So, too, is the elaboration and re-test of the Singer and Wallace study (fn. 115) by J. Faber and R. Weaver, "Participation in Conferences, Treaties, and Warfare in the European System, 1816-1915," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 28 (September 1984), 522-34, which provides evidence for the notion that the presence of effective rules of the game reduces the need to go to war. For an interpretation of Wallace's findings along these lines, see Mansbach and Vasquez (fn. 79), 304-13. This evidence is also consistent with much of what Gilpin (fn. 32) has to say about the outcome of hegemonic struggles.

[117] Singer, "Accounting for International War" (fn. 20), 14.

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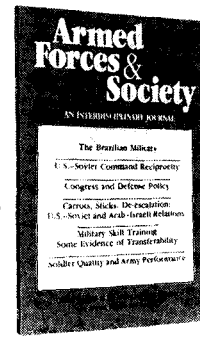

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